

UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA
Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território



PROGRAMA DE DOUTORAMENTO EM MIGRAÇÕES

**Academic mobility within Europe:
evidence on the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London**

Fabiana Minneci

Orientadores: Professora Doutora Maria Lucinda Cruz dos Santos Fonseca
Professor Doutor João Alfredo dos Reis Peixoto

Tese especialmente elaborada para obtenção do grau de doutor no ramo de Geografia,
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Abstract

This thesis offers an innovative contribution to academic mobility as an emerging field of study. More specifically, it proposes a comparative analysis between two different academic mobility patterns in Europe: the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London, as examples of long-term displacements from and to the European south and from the south to the north of Europe. Despite Brexit – Britain's vote to leave the European Union – and its uncertain effects, the United Kingdom is a traditional example of 'core country', attracting academics, and not only, from all over the world. Portugal, instead, is a European 'semi-periphery country' whose scientific system '*is marked by a semi-peripheral condition*' (Delicado 2013: 125). Main dynamics and features of the two mobility patterns are explored and compared, ultimately offering meaningful insights into the several ways in which intra-EU academic mobility can be conceived and experienced.

In an increasingly connected world, research activity is becoming more internationally oriented and collaborations among universities a widespread practice. Although the prominence of academic mobility within both national and European debate, however, there is still a limited understanding on how academic mobility is constituted as an object of inquiry – mostly conceived as a positive force (Robertson 2010) contributing to excellence (European Commission 2014a). As appealing as this idea is, it is important to address the less positive sides of the phenomenon. This means, *inter alia*, recognising that different patterns of intra-EU academic mobility exist and produce diverse effects on the people and the places involved.

A mixed method approach is adopted in this study. More specifically, the empirical part of the research project is structured on the following tracks: (i) the review of two rich secondary datasets supplied by DGEEC (Lisbon) and HESA (London); (ii) 136 exploratory e-surveys disseminated among Italian academics in Lisbon and London, (iii) a world café hosted at IGOT, in Lisbon and six face-to-face and Skype interviews with Italian academics based in London.

Keywords: intra-EU academic mobility, higher education, Italy, Portugal, UK.

Resumo da tese

No final dos anos 90, os sistemas de produção começaram a basear-se de um modo cada vez mais significativo no *conhecimento* e *inovação*. A importância destes dois bens nas economias modernas é tal que se define no termo ‘economia fundada no conhecimento’. Tanto os sistemas nacionais de economia avançada como os supranacionais, como a União Europeia, começam assim a investir de um modo consistente no conhecimento, fazendo concorrência uns aos outros e empenhando-se em atrair trabalhadores altamente qualificados.

Entre os vários trabalhadores altamente qualificados, os académicos têm certamente um papel de primazia na criação e na transferência de conhecimento. Nos últimos vinte anos, portanto, também as universidades começaram a desenvolver programas e estratégias para atrair um número crescente de investigadores estrangeiros e encorajar colaborações internacionais no campo da investigação (Teichler 2015). Em linhas gerais, o desenvolvimento destes programas e estratégias coincide com a adoção de medidas políticas neoliberais que consideram o sector da instrução superior como um ‘*indicador da competitividade económica*’ (Kim 2009: 396) regido por lógicas de mercado, segundo as quais ‘*a função principal da universidade é adquirir os conhecimentos e transformá-los em outputs lucrativos*’ (Cairns et al.: 42).

Apesar da mobilidade académica ocupar uma posição de relevo tanto no debate europeu como a nível nacional, a sua compreensão como objecto de estudo ainda está fortemente limitada à ideia de uma força totalmente positiva (Robertson 2010a) que contribui para a excelência científica (Comissão Europeia 2014a). Frequentemente, fora do discurso oficial permanece o facto de que também dentro de um espaço como a União Europeia a circulação dos investigadores encontra-se significativamente desequilibrada. Na verdade, alguns países têm uma capacidade de atração muito mais forte do que outros. Além disso, mesmo tratando-se de um campo de investigação emergente e em rápida expansão, o quadro geográfico de referência é ainda na sua maioria limitado à mobilidade de académicos para centros de investigação e universidades de prestígio, como o triângulo de ouro no Reino Unido e um número restrito de outros centros em cidades do Norte da Europa (ex. Mahroum 2000, Millard 2005, Morano Foadi 2006). A mobilidade académica, contudo, não é sempre – ou pelo

menos não é somente – uma forma linear de atravessar fronteiras (de um país mais desfavorecido para um país mais rico ou de um centro de investigação periférico para um central/com mais prestígio), pois é desencadeada por um conjunto complexo de variáveis interligadas. Trata-se de um fenómeno que só pode ser compreendido totalmente explorando-se, por um lado, a variedade de contextos e as dinâmicas que o definem e, por outro, as suas diferentes formas.

Partindo destes pressupostos, este trabalho apresenta uma contribuição inovadora no campo da investigação, através da comparação entre dois modelos de mobilidade intracomunitária diferentes: a mobilidade de académicos italianos para Lisboa e para Londres. Ao nível geral, compara-se uma deslocação não convencional, de e para o sul da Europa – no caso de Lisboa – com uma mais clássica, do sul para o norte da Europa – no caso de Londres. Especificamente, esta pesquisa percorre, por um lado, as principais dinâmicas dos dois modelos de mobilidade e, por outro, evidencia os motivos que estão na base destas deslocações, inserindo o fenómeno no contexto político-institucional de referência mais amplo. Para este efeito, adotou-se uma abordagem de métodos mistos, ou seja uma combinação de métodos quantitativos e qualitativos. Definiram-se três tópicos fundamentais de investigação, tendo-se utilizado um método de análise diferente para cada um deles. Mais especificamente, (i) *a exploração dos contextos de referência* ocorre, por um lado, através da análise das principais políticas de investigação e das estratégias implementadas em Itália, Portugal e Reino Unido desde o final dos anos noventa e, por outro, através de uma análise de uma boa base de dados secundários fornecidos pela DGEEC no caso de Lisboa e pela HESA para Londres. (ii) *As razões que estão na base dessas deslocações e as principais características dos dois modelos de mobilidade* foram exploradas através de 136 questionários online criados usando o ‘Google Forms’ e enviados a académicos italianos residentes em Lisboa e em Londres. Finalmente, (iii) tentou-se *aprofundar a análise das motivações da vinda para Lisboa ou para Londres*, através da organização de um ‘world café’ – que teve lugar no IGOT, em Lisboa, em que participaram nove investigadores italianos – e da realização de seis entrevistas individuais com investigadores italianos em Londres.

A análise dos dados obtidos através destas atividades resultou numa série de pontos de reflexão interessantes. Acerca disto, no capítulo quatro evidenciou-se como a política científica portuguesa, na primeira década do século XXI, conduziu ao progressivo desenvolvimento do sistema científico nacional. Embora o sistema científico português esteja ainda marcado por uma '*condição semiperiférica*' (Delicado 2013: 125), tais políticas permitiram ao país uma integração progressiva no sistema europeu (Horta and Blasi 2016). De facto, daí resultou uma forte abertura das universidades portuguesas para o exterior. Neste processo, teve um papel fundamental a opção política de garantir um aumento progressivo das despesas para a investigação e o desenvolvimento, particularmente evidente de 2006 a 2010. Contudo, demonstrou-se também como os novos e dramáticos cortes de financiamento para a investigação, que tiveram início em 2010, estão a reduzir as dinâmicas virtuosas desencadeadas por estas políticas, evidenciando, por outro lado, que o sistema científico português ainda não alcançou a maturidade completa (Heitor e Horta 2012). Não menos importante foi também o investimento numa perspectiva internacional a longo termo, que resultou, aliás, na criação da FCT, a principal entidade de financiamento público em Portugal.

No mesmo capítulo, destacou-se como em 2000 o Reino Unido já definia uma agenda política para a construção de uma economia com base no conhecimento e competitiva a nível global, baseando-se tanto na inovação como na enorme atracção no trabalho altamente qualificado. Além disso, no início dos anos 2000, o sistema científico britânico já era um dos mais competitivos a nível mundial. Portanto, ao contrário de Itália e de Portugal, o Reino Unido já experienciava uma forte '*circulação de cérebros*' atraindo para as suas universidades cientistas de todo o mundo.

Na segunda parte do quarto capítulo apresentaram-se os principais resultados obtidos na análise dos dados estatísticos fornecidos pela DGEEC e pela HESA. Ainda que com alguns limites, tais dados permitiram a definição do quadro macrosociológico no qual escrever o fenómeno. Entre os vários resultados chave, evidenciou-se como o aumento exponencial do número de estudantes de doutoramento italianos presentes nas universidades de Lisboa (que crescerem umas vinte e quatro vezes de 2000/2001 a 2013/2014) confirmam, por um lado, o sucesso das políticas para a ciência implementadas até 2010 e, por outro, o desenvolvimento de uma certa capacidade de atracção das universidades portuguesas.

Nas universidades de Londres registou-se um aumento progressivo do número de investigadores italianos, mas com uma tendência menos acentuada. Isto porque, como foi dito, o sistema científico do Reino Unido partia de uma condição bem diferente em relação ao português, pois já em 2000 se encontrava entre os mais competitivos na Europa e no mundo. Além disso, as universidades de Londres e, de um modo particular, as que se incluem no ‘Russell Group’ desfrutam de uma reputação e prestígio consolidados já há muito tempo.

A análise dos dados primários reunidos neste estudo revelou que as duas trajetórias de mobilidade – de Itália para Lisboa e para Londres – podem ser qualificadas respetivamente como exemplo de ‘mobilidade horizontal’ e ‘mobilidade vertical’ Teichler (2015: 12). No primeiro caso, certamente, os académicos deslocaram-se de e para instituições com mais ou menos os mesmos níveis de qualidade académica, enquanto que no segundo caso deslocaram-se para sistemas mais avançados, muitas vezes desejosos de ‘um salto para cima’ (Ibid.). Em seguida, destacou-se a complexidade das motivações na base da escolha de Lisboa ou Londres. Entre as razões que levaram muitos inquiridos a Lisboa destaca-se o facto de terem ganhado uma bolsa de estudo ou um contrato. Em Londres, parece ter tido um papel particularmente importante o facto de serem recebidos numa universidade de prestígio e de poderem trabalhar em contato com uma comunidade científica de elite. Em ambos os casos, muito importante foi também o papel desempenhado pelas aspirações e expectativas dos inquiridos. Na verdade, em pé de igualdade (uma bolsa de estudo ou um contrato na universidade escolhida), a opção final parece dever-se muito às condições – reais ou imaginadas – referidas aos dois locais e às respetivas universidades.

Em conclusão, os dados recolhidos mostraram um crescente quadro de precariedade e incerteza em relação ao futuro, tanto em Lisboa como em Londres. Em Lisboa, isso parece ser essencialmente devido ao período de incerteza em que se encontra a universidade portuguesa e, mais especificamente, ao facto de, na altura da realização do questionário online e do ‘world café’, muitos dos investigadores terem um contrato por tempo determinado. No Reino Unido, é sobretudo o *Brexit* e os seus possíveis efeitos, ainda hoje incertos, que criam incerteza.

Das histórias dos inquiridos, emerge, portanto, como a mobilidade de Itália para Lisboa e Londres se deve, frequentemente, a uma combinação de *escolha* e de *necessidade* e implica constantes negociações, com um forte impacto tanto na vida profissional como na privada.

Palavras-chave: mobilidade académica na União Europeia, ensino superior, Itália, Portugal, Reino Unido.

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1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, knowledge and innovation have been increasingly recognised as strategic assets, driving *inter alia* economic growth. This largely explains why national and supranational institutional bodies have been actively investing in the attraction of highly skilled workers in a global perspective, thus finding themselves competing with one another (Avveduto et al. 2004).

In the EU, the promotion of a ‘free circulation of knowledge’ among member states has become an imperative (Council of the European Union 2012), encouraging the idea of a smooth knowledge transfer within a European space, rather than between different countries. To strengthen competitiveness, the European institutions have also been investing in the attraction of highly qualified third-country nationals, for example through the introduction of the so-called Blue Card Directive (Council of the European Union 2009b).

For their part, higher education institutions (HEIs) have been developing strategies and programmes for recruiting – and retaining – foreign-born students and academics and fostering international research collaborations. Altogether, since the late 1990s, mobility has been promoted at the European level as ‘*an essential component of academic’s and student’s learning experience*’ (Robertson 2010a: 2) and an opportunity to make ‘*a leap forward*’ (Teichler 2015: 9).

Within this broad framework, the present study offers an innovative contribution to academic mobility as an emerging field of study. As will be further explained in chapter two, in the context of this thesis, attention is drawn on the cross-border mobility of Italian doctoral students, early-career researchers, postdoctoral fellows, experienced researchers and university professors, hereinafter called *academics* or *academic staff*, using both terms interchangeably.

To capture some of the complex dynamics behind intra-EU academic mobility, two different mobility patterns will be explored and compared: the long-term mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon (as an example of long-term displacement from and to the European south) and London (that is a more traditional displacement from the south to the north of Europe). The rationale behind this choice is twofold. Firstly, the comparison of such different, almost contrasting, mobility trajectories and their key features will give empirical evidence that different mobility patterns exist even within the European Union itself. Secondly, the comparison will allow for a better comprehension of the whole decision-making process of individuals behind both the *decision to move* and that of *where to move*. In fact, in most cases, mobility and location decisions are based on a set of considerations that include, of course, the professional career but are not limited to this, at least not in a narrow sense.

Therefore, this study explores the variety of macro, meso and micro level aspects shaping the mobility towards the two cities, focusing on both the professional career and the personal lives of a few Italian mobile academics, ultimately with the aim of providing some insights into the directions that the theoretical debate might take. To this end, different data collection methods have been chosen, varying from the analysis of national statistical datasets supplied by DGEEC and HESA, two e-surveys disseminated among Italian academics in Lisbon and London, a ‘world café’ convened at IGOT and, finally, six interviews with Italian academics based in London.

1.1 Relevance of the research topic

As mentioned above, academic mobility is – in all its various forms – strongly encouraged at the European level. The aim seems to be to promote pan-European mobility of academics, considering their relocation as a value in itself (European Commission 2017). However, it is still unclear to what extent this conceptual framework can capture the complexity of nuances characterising current patterns of academic mobility in Europe. To put it differently, is there anything else missing? For instance, attention needs to be given on the pre-existing and ongoing asymmetries between all European countries, and therefore on the lack of a balanced circulation of academics within all member states. Yet although this is an emerging field of study, the geographical frame of reference is still very much limited to the mobility of academic

staff towards central and prestigious higher education institutions – such as the UK ‘golden triangle’ and a small number of other places in northern Europe or in the United States (e.g. Mahroum 2000; Millard 2005; Morano-Foadi 2006) – which are, of course, particularly attractive places for academics wishing to move. Academic mobility, however, is not always – or at least not only – a linear form of border crossing (e.g. from a poorer towards a wealthier area or from peripheral to prestigious HEIs), because it is shaped by a complex combination of structural, personal, cultural variables and often facilitated by professional networks.

In this scenario, mainstream literature seems to overlook the variety of contexts, forms, as well as the complex dynamics and forces standing behind the relocation of academic staff in Europe. This is why, ultimately, adjusting the analytical framework of reference is essential. In other words, there is a real need to expand our understanding of academic mobility in Europe as a research field, highlighting that different patterns of mobility exist (Hoffman 2009).

In addition, as it will be seen in the next chapter, the cross-border mobility of academics has traditionally been framed within the perspective of the human capital theory. Within this framework, mobility is conceptualised as a simplistic cost-benefit model, according to which academics are rational and passive economic agents choosing to move only to improve future earnings. In an attempt to take further our theoretical understanding of the topic, this perspective will be challenged and a broader understanding of the set of circumstances that trigger or prevent mobility towards specific places and higher education institutions will be fostered.

1.2 Objective and research questions

Through both the critical analysis of secondary and primary data, this study seeks to explore the main structural features of the mobility patterns mentioned above and to understand what has triggered, enabled or inhibited the relocation of Italian academics towards the two cities and their respective higher education institutions. Hence, the general aim of the present research is *to explore the resemblances and differences between the mobility patterns of Italian academics who have been carrying out research activity or teaching at a university or higher education institution in Lisbon and London since 2000.*

Building on this broad objective, a set of more specific questions was developed and grouped into three areas of inquiry, guiding the reader towards a deeper understanding of the two mobility patterns. For each of the three set of questions, a different data collection method was chosen.

First area of inquiry. 'Data storytelling': exploring the contexts

- How did science and innovation policies evolve in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom, from the late 1990s onwards?
- How did Italian academics' presence in Lisbon and London evolve/change over the past two decades?
- How are they distributed across institutions, disciplines and employment functions, according to the latest available data?

Second area of inquiry. Exploring the reasons

- What are the profiles of the Italian academic staff based in Lisbon and London? (e.g. by age, sex, educational level).
- What are the conditions that have triggered or constrained their mobility from Italy towards the two cities?
- Why did these academics enter the Portuguese and the UK scientific systems?

Third area of inquiry. Fostering a collaborative dialogue and a critical reflection

- How do academics themselves describe academic mobility as a practice and what does being 'on the move' mean to them?
- What makes Lisbon and London (un)desirable choices for a foreign-born academic?
- Plans and future expectations.

Lisbon's and London's higher education institutions have been chosen for their different, and potentially opposed, attractive capacity for international academics,

therefore allowing for a broad understanding of the many ways in which academic mobility can be practiced and experienced. In fact, despite Brexit – Britain’s vote to leave the European Union – and its uncertain effects, the United Kingdom is a traditional example of ‘core country’, attracting academics from all over the world. Portugal instead, is a European ‘semi-periphery country’, and science ‘*is marked by a semi-peripheral condition*’ (Delicado 2013: 125).

The reasons behind the choice of Italy as a sending country are the following. Italy provides an interesting example of a southern European country where persistent structural weaknesses, added to the impact of the 2008 crisis, are discouraging the permanence of a considerable number of academics and limiting the system’s capacity to attract talents from abroad. Further, the mobility of researchers and other highly skilled workers from and to Italy tends to be a quite popular topic of discussion within the scientific community, public opinion and media. However, despite the attempts to address some of the concerns expressed by academics themselves (e.g. Becker et al. 2003; Morano-Foadi 2006; Beltrame 2007; Milio et al. 2012), Italy still suffers from an almost total lack of circulation of talents.

In view of the above, through the involvement of some Italian academics based in the two cities, the main reasons standing behind geographical and institutional mobility decisions are explored and compared, pointing out main similarities and differences.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The thesis is divided into six chapters, the first of which is this introduction. Chapter two presents both a critical reflection about the key terms recurrent in this thesis (such as *highly skilled worker*, *academic mobility* and *academic migration*, *academic staff*, *horizontal and vertical mobility*) and a review of the literature on the topic, emphasising what is known and what is still missing. More specifically, the key passages and the evolution of the conceptual framework are pointed out, stressing that it is only towards the late 1990s, under the influence of the globalisation processes, that the issues of internationalisation and, notably, mobility had a breakthrough.

In chapter three the objective and the main research questions are recalled, and the methodology used in this thesis is outlined, discussing the rationale for this choice and its implications.

The central part of this research is presented in chapters four and five. Chapter four is based solely on the analysis of secondary data, whilst in chapter five, main results of the primary data are presented. More specifically, chapter four explores the two patterns of academic mobility over a period of fifteen years, approximately, drawing on the original datasets supplied by the Portuguese *Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência* (DGEEC) and the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), therefore allowing for an accurate setting of the macro-scale context. The above-mentioned datasets include an extensive range of variables referred to the Italian academic staff in Lisbon and London's higher education institutions, such as their professional occupation within the university, the name of the university where they are carrying out a research activity or teaching and the academic field of competence.

Chapter five presents a comprehensive understanding of the main reasons that motivated or enabled the mobility of several Italian academics to Lisbon and London, together with their future mobility intentions. The key findings of the explorative 136 e-surveys disseminated among Italian academics in Lisbon and London are presented, together with the insights provided by the nine participants of the world café convened at IGOT, in Lisbon, and the six interviews with Italian academics based in London.

Finally, chapter six summarises and discusses the main findings of the thesis, linking them to the theoretical framework of reference. It ultimately provides new insights and potential future directions for the field.

2. The state of knowledge on the mobility of academics: concepts and patterns

2.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the introduction, academic mobility is strongly encouraged at the European level (European Higher Education Area and European Research Area), being generally recognised among the most important means of achieving knowledge transfer (Ackers 2008). Although the prominence of the topic, theoretical studies and evidence on the mobility of academics are still at their infancy, together with a limited understanding on how academic mobility is constituted as an object of inquiry – mostly as of ‘*a positive force*’ (Robertson 2010a: 4) contributing to excellence (European Commission 2014a). As appealing as this idea is, it is important to address its understated outcomes. This means, *inter alia*, recognising that there are different forms of academic mobility, which are often interconnected and produce diverse effects on both the people and the places involved.

As will be thoroughly discussed in this chapter, the studies on highly skilled and academic mobility tended to overlap up until very recently. Therefore, this chapter attempts to address some of the issues mentioned above by examining both the literature on highly skilled migration and academic mobility. The first section focuses on a few definitions of ‘highly skilled worker’. In the second section, a description and justification of how academic staff is defined in this study is provided, followed by possible differences between the *mobility* and the *migration* of academics. Further, in the same section, the various forms of mobility in academia are exposed, namely those implying a physical relocation and those that do not. Then, a short reflection on the concepts of ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical mobility’ is introduced. The third section presents the pioneer studies on the topic, which focus on the broad context of highly skilled

migration. The fourth section debates how the globalisation processes influenced the literature of the 1990s. Finally, the last section outlines the available literature focusing specifically on the mobility of academic staff, addressing a few concepts and the macro, micro and meso-level 'dark sides' often overlooked in mainstream literature.

2.2 Conceptual problems: who are the highly skilled?

Academic mobility cannot be approached and fully understood without first considering the worldwide competition for highly skilled workers started during the 1990s, when skills start playing a crucial role, as key engine to innovation and knowledge-based economic growth (Florida 2005). Indeed, although mobility has been historically part of academic life (Bauder 2015), the rise of the 21st century global knowledge-based economy gave scientific research and innovation a prominent role and the recruitment of highly skilled workers from other countries a necessity to improve the competitiveness of national systems.

Back in the 1990s, Salt (1997) stressed the lack of comparable data on the stock and flows of highly skilled migrants, due to a major problem in defining unequivocally who these people are. Since then, there has been a growing interest in the topic, even though no shared understanding of the term 'highly skilled' still exists. In a broad sense, a highly skilled individual is someone with tertiary education – university degree and beyond – (Lindsay Lowell 2002) or above the 5th level of education (ISCED). While this definition has long been in use (Mahroum 2000), holding evidence of formal qualification acquired through education is not a sufficient condition by itself. In fact, it does not consider the qualification acquired through experience or informal training (ILO 1990; Koser and Salt 1997), as well as the growing number of cases of 'brain waste', due, for instance, to the lack of recognition of qualifications outside of the country in which they are issued (Batalova and Lindsay Lowell 2006).

Therefore, over time the need for the formulation of additional ways of defining highly skilled people has occurred. Among the various criteria of identification generally accepted, the most relevant are:

- (i) the upper skilled occupations of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) proposed by the International Labour Office (ILO).

Occupations are based on *skill level*, which measures the range of tasks performed and *skill specialisation*, defining the field of knowledge required. Therefore, skill level defines the amount formal training and education required for a specific job and skill specialisation reflects the kind of work performed (Parsons et al. 2014).

- (ii) the definition included in the Frascati Manual, developed by OECD, focusing upon a definition of R&D personnel and suggesting that highly skilled workers strictly belong to the field of Science and Technology (Ibid.: 11; Teichler 2015).
- (iii) the definition of high-skilled workers in Science and Technology (S&T) offered by the Canberra Manual on Human Resources in Science and Technology, a joint-initiative of the OECD and EUROSTAT. Two types of highly skilled workers are considered: those having completed a university or other tertiary degree in an S&T field of study and those employed in an S&T occupation, though not formally qualified for it (Parsons et al. 2014).

Attention is usually paid to the definition provided by the Frascati and Canberra Manuals which, more specifically, identify four ways to classify science and technology workers: by qualification; by activity; by sector and by occupation (OECD/Eurostat 1995; Mahroum 2000). As Parsons et al. point out (2014: 11):

The Canberra Manual remains the most popular attempt at producing a common definition of high-skilled workers based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations but its narrow focus on S&T occupations disregards other highly skilled categories including businessmen, managers, teachers and healthcare providers.

More broadly, the diversity of conceptual meaning and classifications developed since the 1990s suggests that the mobility of highly skilled workers is a far more complex phenomenon compared to current written definitions and classifications. As noted by Batalova and Lindsay Lowell (2006), all the various attempts to define the concept reflect the context in which these definitions and taxonomies have been coined, which, in turn,

should warn against excessive reliance on them. The very definition of ‘highly skilled worker’ has been evolving over time and constantly reinterpreted, in accordance with political, economic and social process. Hence, if, on the one hand, overcoming cross-country differences in defining ‘the best and the brightest’ would allow the harmonisation of data collection internationally, a standardised definition – counting narrow criteria, mutually exclusive – would create a gap between theoretical models and realities on the ground, as it does not grasp the fact that highly skilled workers are not a homogeneous group and cannot fit into strict definitions.

2.3 Academic mobility and academic migration at a first glance

As already argued, the physical mobility of students and academic staff expanded substantially during the 21st century and it appears to be the most obvious result of the internationalisation of higher education (e.g. support for international activities, learning and research collaborations). As Teichler noted, within the field of internationalisation of higher education (2015: 7):

[...] prime attention is paid to international student mobility. Mobility of academics, i.e. persons active at higher education institutions and other research institutions, has been less in the limelight, but is viewed as very important for academic progress in general, for international understanding, comparative analysis and as a counterbalance to parochial thinking in general.

Although the prominence of the topic, evidence on the mobility of academics within Europe is still in its infancy and the use of the terms related to the phenomenon often varies from author to author. For this reason, before carrying out a review of scientific literature, it is worth reminding how academic staff is defined in this research and then trying to get a better understanding of what key authors mean by academic mobility and academic migration.

2.3.1 *Academic staff: who are we talking about?*

In general terms, academic staff includes a specific set of highly skilled workers: people with tertiary education degree, whose primary assignment is research, instruction or both. Having in mind the need to balance the limits of any definitions, this research focuses solely upon:

[...] workers who are in or preparing for the academic labour market, including doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, early-career scholars and established academics. (Bauder 2015: 84).

In line with this definition, in this research attention is drawn on Italian doctoral students, early-career scholars, postdoctoral fellows, experienced researchers and university professors carrying out research activity or teaching at a university or any other higher education institution in Lisbon and London.

2.3.2 *Academic mobility and academic migration*

Migration and mobility are the two ways in which theorists and policymakers frame the movement of people, ideas and goods. Whilst a detailed description of the ways in which social sciences explore and frame *mobilities* is beyond the scope of this research,¹ in this section it is worth considering how the two concepts are generally applied to intra-EU flows of people and then specifically to the relocation of academic staff. As pointed out by Glorius et al. (2013), the term migration is often used within European institutions to denote the arrival within EU of third country nationals, whilst mobility is used to refer to changes in residence from a member state to another. The European Commission, in fact, suggests that intra-EU mobility refers to '*people born in the EU who live in another member State than the one they were born in*', whilst third country-migrants '*refers to people born outside the EU moving into EU Member States*' (European Commission 2016). This view however, is not completely shared by the scientific community, as confirmed by a recent empirical study related to current south-north migration of European citizens (Lafleur and Stanek 2017: 5):

¹ For a detailed analysis see, for example, Sheller and Urry (2006) and Cresswell (2010).

This conceptual choice [the combined use of mobility and migration referred to changes of residence of EU citizens] therefore aims to go beyond the implicit qualitative assessment hidden behind these two terms in policy debates according to which mobility—unlike migration—refers to voluntary and mostly desirable movements of EU citizens. By looking at the conditions in which Southern EU citizens decide to leave their home country and the treatment that some of them receive upon arrival in destination countries, we shall thus reconsider the validity of such an assessment.

More broadly, high-skilled migration authors tend to frame the issue as follows. As will be thoroughly explained in the theoretical discussion, the concept of high-skilled migration and mobility have been conceived in different historical periods. High-skilled migration studies precede mobility studies, which in turn have emerged only during the 1990s, aiming to bridge the gap left open by migration studies. In this sense, as Al Ariss (2010) and Tharenou (2010) noted, a migration can be defined as one of the many possible ways people decide to relocate and settle in a place and it often relates to a long-term – permanent or semi-permanent – unidirectional movement across national borders. With reference to the direction of these flows, in traditional studies (the so-called traditional view), skilled migrations often implied – yet not always – the relocation from a developing country (or poorer areas) to industrialized nations (or wealthier areas). It must be said, however, that this does not apply to the first studies on ‘brain drain’ (Royal Society 1963), which focused on the migration of British scientists to the United States and Canada.

Due to the globalization processes and the rapid increase in cross-border movements of people and global interconnections, since the late twentieth century both the scientific community and policymakers have been preferring the use of the term *mobility*, as it draws attention to the temporary and multidirectional nature of the action, the idea of free choice, an enriching experience for all parties involved and – it would be difficult to deny – it appears to be less controversial and neutral.

Overall, the distinction between mobility and migration often reflects the intention of the authors to place emphasis on the temporary or permanent nature of the movement. For instance, the above is closely linked to the distinction drawn by Kim

(2017) between academic mobility and academic migration. According to the author, both academic mobility and migration share the crossing of territorial borders. What changes, though, is the purpose of moving: *mobility* recalls the transitory nature of the phenomenon, so that Kim refers to it when dealing with short-term displacements (e.g. visits), whilst *migration* refers to the employment status of a certain person, thus she tends to tie the concept with long-term movements subject to national particularities and institutional contingencies.

In short, although there might be some differences between the *mobility* and *migration* of highly-skilled workers, the way this division is framed is far from being uniform. On the other hand, it is most likely that focusing on a clear distinction is once again a question of little validity, which can limit our understanding of the phenomenon as a whole (Iredale and Appleyard 2001; Ackers 2005a; Ackers and Gill 2008). Further, in the specific context of academic mobility, the ways in which *human mobility* and *knowledge transfer* interact with each other are particularly complex. As will be described thoroughly in the next section, academics may choose to be *on the move* for different periods of their lives. For that reason, it is very difficult, and perhaps inappropriate, to position academic staff as either settled in a place or constantly on the move (Fahey and Kenway 2010).

2.3.3 Characterizing academic mobility

When dealing with the mobility in academia, a variety of situations come to mind. This is because it is a deliberately undefined and broad phenomenon, counting a variety of mobility patterns and different purposes. As pointed out in recent literature (Kim 2010; Teichler 2015), academic mobility may relate to:

- short-term displacement of academic staff from one country to another (e.g. visits, conferences, sabbaticals);
- long-term relocation of academics from one country to another (e.g. for study or research purposes and teaching);
- relocation of academics from a place, institution or discipline to another, within the same country;
- inter-sectoral mobility of academics (e.g. between academia and industry).

Although academic mobility very often refers to what Robertson (2010a: 5) calls the *spatiality of movement* – or territorial mobility – it should not be restricted to this. As Teichler states (2015: 8):

Higher education and science are international more or less by definition in adhering to the principle of borderless generation, dissemination and search of/for new systematic knowledge.

This implies that, of course, other ways of knowledge transfer across borders exist and do not imply a physical relocation: international publications, virtual communications, distance learning courses or programmes and international databases, to give but a few examples (Altbach 1989; Kesselring 2005; Teichler 2015). In a broad sense, as the creation of transnational higher education systems has become a key priority worldwide – in Europe, north and Latin America, Africa (Clark 2007) – different forms of academic mobility have become a widespread practice for a majority of academics and not the sole prerogative of those physically on the move.

2.3.4 ‘Horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ mobility

Paraphrasing Robertson (2010a: 643), much of the existing literature tend to frame and privilege academic mobility ‘*as a good thing for everyone*’ or an expression of cosmopolitanism. Previous studies have shown that academic mobility is often associated with the idea of progression in academic career and, in some cases, this progression is implicitly expected (Ackers et al. 2008). Yet, recent evidence suggests that moving abroad does not necessarily translate into an upward change in the professional position for researchers – e.g. academic advancement, career or pay progression – (Cantwell 2009: 207):

Postdocs find little difficulty in moving from one country to another, yet moving into a faculty position anywhere is increasingly difficult. As a result of shifting labor arrangements of academic production, postdocs, and especially international postdocs, are at danger of becoming a global research underclass.

Other authors (Rivza, Teichler 2007; Teichler 2015) put forward a similar argument when suggesting that actors involved in this form of mobility (students, professors, institutions of higher education, governments) normally have different expectations. In this regard, Teichler (2015: 12) states:

There is an important distinction that never will show up in official statistics: that between ‘vertical’ and ‘horizontal’ student mobility. In the former, students move from an academically and often economically less favourable country or institution to a more favourable country and institution: This is based on the hope that the quality of one’s competences is substantially enhanced by such a leap upwards, and adaption to the host country and institution is the imperative. In the latter case, students are mobile between countries and institutions of a similar academic level: learning from valuable contrasts is the aim rather than a leap upwards.

In response to the aforementioned, comparing the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London will be used as a tool to understand whether the same concept may be transferred to academic mobility. More specifically, we will try to understand whether Lisbon and London can be conceived as examples of ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ mobility for Italian academics and explore the key effects of mobility on their professional and personal lives. To rephrase, the two patterns of academic mobility will be explored as examples of long-term displacements (from and to the European south; from the south to the north of Europe), which are not necessarily driven by the same considerations and do not necessarily produce – the same – professional outcomes.

2.4 Early studies on the mobility of the highly skilled: the traditional view

The pioneering studies of the 1960s place academic staff mobility in the wider framework of highly skilled workers’ migration, without distinguishing between professional sectors (Milio et al. 2012). More specifically, attention on the migration of highly skilled workers dates back to 1963, when the Royal Society publishes a report focusing on the migration of British scientists and proposing the first definition of ‘brain drain’ (Royal Society 1963). In this report, the term ‘brain drain’ is used to define the

concern expressed by the Society about the effect of the emigration of scientists from the United Kingdom to the United States and Canada.

Over the 1960s and 1970s, economic studies dominate the literature on high-skilled migration (Docquier and Rapoport 2007), since economists are the first to identify the relations between education, training, growth and migration. In these years, economic theorists propose two models providing an explanation of the possible effects of the migration of highly skilled workers: the theory of human capital and the neo-Marxist dependency theory (Iredale 1999 and 2001; Docquier and Rapoport 2007).

Both these interpretations – which make up the so-called *standard view* (Beltrame 2007) or *traditional view* (Docquier and Rapoport 2007) – assume that most highly educated people move where their education reaps the highest benefit, that is industrialized countries. The two theories provide quite different explanations of the migration: the theory of human capital is a micro sociological theory, assigning a leading role to the individuals and looking at them as perfectly rational actors, whereas the neo-Marxist dependency theory is a macro sociological model and it assigns a record to external forces that affect individuals' actions.

The human capital theory was developed by some members of the so-called Chicago School – among them Mincer (1958) Becker (1962 and 1964) and Schultz (1961) – and shall be considered an extension of the more general neo-classical economic theory (De Haas 2008). As the name itself says, the model puts great emphasis on the knowledge and skills acquired through education and training and, for the first time, focuses on human capital as an investment good (an asset) and no more as a consumption good (a cost). Human capital is a crucial factor as it increases workers' productive capacity and, thus, leads to higher outputs (Schultz 1961; Becker 1964). In this sense, the theory rests on the assumption that the stock of human capital of a nation is crucial for its prosperity and economic growth.

Following the works of Becker, Sjaastad (1962) proposes to include the human capital theory in the studies and research on migration (Bauer and Zimmermann 1994). In Sjaastad's model (1962), the migration is conceived as an investment decision and it predicts that highly skilled workers – the highest productive individuals, able to create technology and use it in an appropriate way (Becker 1962 and 1964) – migrate in response to *pull factors*, that is to say if the returns in the country of destination (net of

the costs that the movement implies) are larger than in the country of origin (Bauer and Zimmermann 1994).

During the 1970s, the rise of the dependency models (the 'development of underdevelopment' Frank 1969; 'dependent development' Cardoso 1972) and world-systems theory (Wallerstein 1974-1980) influence the studies of other theorists of highly skilled migration, who focus on the migration of highly skilled workers from the global south to the global north. The international debate thus evolves from the European 'brain drain' to the 'reverse transfer of technology' (Bhagwati 1977) of highly skilled workers from developing countries to industrialised nations.

Starting from the assumption that the economic power is unequally distributed among core countries (industrialized countries) and periphery ones (developing countries), the neo-Marxist theorists look at the elite migration as a response to strong macro-level *push factors*, such as structural causes that operate in the countries of origin: poverty, lack of work or its poor remuneration, overpopulation, oppressive regimes, wars, environmental disasters.

Bhagwati and Hamada (1974) point out that the migration of highly skilled workers produces a detrimental effect on the countries of origins or, in other words, a negative externality. This detrimental effect is 'brain drain': a net loss of human capital for the countries of origin, which invest in the education of highly skilled workers without receiving any return from this investment (*ibid.*). To rephrase, 'brain drain' occurs if the flows and the transfer of knowledge follow the same direction. Furthermore, since high-skilled migration causes losses in the countries of origin, Bhagwati (1976) proposes to compensate these losses with a 'tax on brains' levied on emigrants residing in industrialised countries.

Over time, the traditional view has been challenged for several reasons. Firstly, for being a static model viewing the migration as a linear and unidirectional movement, particularly from developing countries to industrialized ones (Brandi 2001). Secondly, for aiming to define solely the negative effects of highly skilled migration on the countries of origin (Beltrame 2007) and considering the migrants as 'automatons', passive individuals overwhelmed by external forces (Arango 2004). Furthermore, these models have been questioned by 'middle-range' studies, since they tend to offer a simplistic theorisation of the migration (King 2012). Indeed, as evidence suggests,

people do not move because of a defined and limited set of factors mutually exclusive, pull or push, but rather, for a combination of both (Massey et al. 1998; Castles 2007; Portes 2010). Finally, as shall be seen below, the standard view does not consider the capacity of institutional bodies (governments, international organizations) to influence the direction of the flows through the implementation of policies and specific strategies (Iredale 2001).

2.5 The impact of globalisation on the study of highly skilled mobility

Towards the end of the 1990s, empirical evidence – particularly flows directed to emerging countries or new centres (Rudolph and Hillmann 1997; Meyer et al. 2001) and cases of return migration among foreign-born students, after completing a PhD in the United States (Johnson and Regets 1998) – leads theorists of highly skilled migration to the conclusion that the traditional view framework is no longer appropriate (Brandi, 2001). As previously discussed, the very definition of highly skilled relocation as a *migration* is questioned, because the reality shows that highly skilled flows are often temporary and multidirectional, rather than permanent and unidirectional (Meyer 2003; Carr et al. 2005). Thus, a new body of studies emerges, and the terminology adjusted to the new theories, gradually switching from the use of *migration* to *mobility*.

As a response to both the emergence of new forms of mobility and the significant increase in the movement of people, ideas and goods which starts in the 1990s, various theories consolidate, providing different analysis and new paradigms of reference. Attention shifts to two theoretical models: the ‘circulationist perspective’ (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997; Johnson and Regets 1998; Meyer et al. 2001; Williams et al. 2004; Teferra 2005) and the ‘structuration approach’ (Goss and Lindquist 1995; Iredale 1999 and 2001).

In the ‘circulationist approach’, the concept of ‘brain circulation’ – the circular movement of high-skilled labour across nations – is coined to show that recent globalisation processes are facilitating and encouraging labour mobility, without necessarily benefitting one country at the expense of another. Two aspects are particularly relevant in this approach: i) high-skilled mobility is conceptualised as an ongoing process, rather than a unidirectional movement ii) the issue of knowledge transfer is detached from the physical presence of the high-skilled worker (Ackers

2005b). In this sense, the notion of 'brain circulation' need to be understood as an alternative to the concept of 'brain drain', used by the theorists belonging to the traditional view.

The conceptualisation of the migration as a circular process draws upon the studies on *transnationalism* and *transmigrants* (Glick Schiller et al. 1992: 1):

We have defined transnationalism as the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement. Immigrants who build such social fields are designated "transmigrants." Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple relations – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political that span borders. Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks that connect them to two or more societies simultaneously.

More specifically, transnational studies begin to influence the study of high-skilled and scientific mobility as follows. Inspired by the fact that recent technologies of transportation and communications facilitate maintaining ties with various places (Glick Schiller et al. 1995), Meyer and Brown (1999) identify the presence of a 'diaspora option': forty-one networks that enable the transmission of knowledge between the countries of origin and destination, through different modalities (among them, scientific collaborations, exchange, joint research programmes).

Gaillard and Gaillard (1997) draft a picture in which the emergence of a knowledge-based economy marked the beginning of a new era, with the creation of a global labour market for professionals. Likewise, Meyer et al. (2001:309) suggest that, in a global knowledge society, '*knowledge is expected to flow more freely, no longer limited to national constraints*'. Besides that, Meyer et al. (*Ibid.*) point out that the recent flows of high-skilled workers are no longer following the traditional and permanent south to north direction (centre-periphery), but they rather include different centres of attraction. In their words: '*the migration of skills has become multilateral and polycentric*' (*Ibid.*: 310).

On the same topic, Saxenian (2002 and 2005) points out that the processes of relocation have led to the creation of new centres of attraction of the human capital. Her studies on hi-tech industrial districts in Taiwan, India and China (2002) show that the processes of globalization could facilitate the emergence of centres of production with high knowledge content outside traditional 'core countries', thus questioning once again the traditional core-periphery model. Finally, taking distance from the theory of human capital, Salt and Singleton (1995) point out that the migration of high-skilled workers has become less dependent on individuals' free choice since transnational companies are the ones actually deciding where to relocate their employees.

Regarding this latter aspect, however, Peixoto (2001) suggests that the flows of high-skilled workers created by transnational companies, transferring their staff in various parts of the world, should be considered an exceptional case or, otherwise said, a distinctive form of highly skilled migration. In fact, high-skilled individuals working in transnational companies '*enjoy an ease of migration that is unfamiliar to other migrants*' (*Ibid.*: 1049). Following the reasoning of Peixoto, Ackers (2005a) argues that the organisational channels offer to these high-skilled workers structured support and assistance during and after their relocation, but the same does not happen when other high-skilled workers move, such as academics.

It emerges from the above that the 'circulationist approach' suggests the emergence of new forms of high-skilled flows, directed to a variety of centres of attraction, rather than imply a simplistic unidirectional and permanent south to north movement:

As a result, mobility has lost some of the traditional features that led it to being characterised as a brain drain. For example, it may be temporary – with occasional returns to the country of origin – rather than permanent; it is multi-directional instead of unilateral; and, being a global movement, it affects developed as well as developing countries. Furthermore, the increased ability to interact at a distance helps maintain umbilical links with regions of origin, in contrast to the past when a break with such a region was often total. (Meyer 2003: 1-2)

Furthermore, high-skilled migrants are conceptualised as transnational migrants, thus continuously crossing borders, maintaining ties both in the places of origin and in those where they live and work. In the words of Favell et al. (2007: 19):

A second problem with the zero-sum assumption underlying the brain gain/drain debate is that this formulation ignores or, at best, understates the frequent back and forth movement of migrants, ideas, knowledge, information, and skill sets that is now a routine part of contemporary transnationalism. These backs and forth movements are part of a pattern of trans-local interconnectivity that many skilled migrants, like their unskilled counterparts, maintain to their regions and localities of origin.'

On the other side of the debate, the authors supporting the 'structuration approach' (Iredale 1999: 91) argue that contemporary mobility of high-skilled workers does not merely depend on rational and logical decisions made by individuals, but it is often shaped by favourable conditions offered by '*individual and organizational agents*' (Goss and Lindquist 1995: 337). More specifically, both nation states and companies can influence the direction and selectively affect the composition of high-skilled flows through specific interventions, which include:

- (i) the adoption of a set of national policies to attract high-skilled workers from abroad or encourage their return: *return, restriction, recruitment, reparation, resourcing* and *retention* (the 'six Rs' model of Lindsay Lowell 2002). Furthermore, the implementation of bilateral or multilateral agreements designed by regional blocs – such as the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Mercosur – ensuring the mutual recognition of formal qualifications and facilitating the circulation of professionals ('government induced' mobility) (Goss and Lindquist 1995; Iredale 2001).
- (ii) favourable conditions offered by companies and corporations to their high-skilled employees, encouraging them to move to specific places, where their competences are particularly needed ('industry led' mobility) (*Ibid.*).

In this perspective, the authors supporting the 'structuration approach' point out that the advanced economies and regional blocs are taking steps to simplify and harmonise the procedures for transferring high-skilled workers from a place to another. Then, the fact that a country can 'win' or 'lose' this competition for talents largely depends on the effectiveness of policies and strategies adopted (Skeldon 2009). This means that the receiving countries can govern, to at least some extent, the flows of high-skilled people by encouraging, preventing and selecting their entry through the implementation of national laws and rules. Paraphrasing Ambrosini (2005: 50), the tendency of governments to adopt migration policies should be considered an influential factor, which mediates between the *aspiration* and the *real possibility* of migrating. In this context, high-skilled migrants are very privileged, being able to move across national borders more freely than other migrants.

A clear example of this logic is the Lisbon Strategy set out in 2000 by the European Council, whose goal was to make the Union '*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.*' (Council of the European Union 2000). In fact, over time, the priority of the European institutions gradually became that of raising the stock of highly skilled workers in Europe, promoting their mobility, and then attracting high-skilled workers from third-countries, through the introduction of the so-called Blue Card Directive. (Council of the European Union 2009b).

Overall, both the 'circulationist perspective' and the 'structuration approach' offer new and more comprehensive ways of looking and understanding the new mobility of high-skilled workers that increased in the 1990s. However, even though, in a globalised world, new areas tend to attract highly skilled workers and various forms of mobility exist, this shall not automatically lead to the dissolution of the core-periphery vision. To back up this idea, evidence shows that it is not possible to talk about a balanced circulation of talents (Mahroum 2005; Fontes 2007).

As a few authors point out (Beltrame 2007; Kim 2010), indeed, since the early 2000s, the number of highly skilled workers moving in OECD countries has increased, which means that inequalities among regions are still evident. To sum up, the authors supporting the 'circulationist approach' tends to emphasize the positive impact of globalisation processes on high-skilled mobility and the positive externalities generated

in sending and receiving countries. On the other side of the debate, those authors supporting the 'structuration approach' seem more cautious when dealing with the spread of benefits among sending and receiving regions. Rather, they suggest that much depend on national and supranational policy measures, strategies and regulations adopted by governments to attract highly skilled workers from abroad.

In conclusion, to get a comprehensive understanding of the mobility of high-skilled workers and among them, academics, all the approaches described should be considered complementary rather than alternative. Since the mobility of the highly skilled and academics is a complex field of inquiry, including different forms, trajectories and individuals' motivations, it cannot be investigated and fully understood through one single theory, but rather by gathering together the insights offered by a multidisciplinary literature.

2.6 Towards a comprehensive understanding of academic mobility

Universities and higher education institutions are in some sense *mobile* by definition, since physical mobility and knowledge dissemination have been historically relevant characteristics in the *universitates* (Kim 2009; Bauder 2015). Although mobility has always been part of academic life, in Europe, the process of internationalisation expands substantially in the 1990s, together with a growing competition for researchers (Teichler 2015). Under the influence of economic globalisation process, neoliberal policy measures are implemented, increasingly seeing the higher education sector as a 'marketplace' (Kim 2009: 397), where universities' main function is 'to capture knowledge and turn it into profitable outputs' (Cairns et al. 2017: 42). In this context, structured mobility and exchange programmes are introduced, with the aim of attracting students and academic staff from abroad and supporting collaborations between different higher education institutions (Teichler 2015; Kim 2009). This process further intensified in the first decade of the 21st century, when member states are asked to increase the expenditures for research activities, as part of the Lisbon Strategy's call for making Europe 'the most competitive economy' in the world (*Ibid.*).

At present, an era defined 'the knowledge-based economy', knowledge and innovation are commonly accepted as the drivers of economic growth or a way to enhance countries' capacity to improve their performance. Hence, on the one hand, the

international recruitment of talents has further increased globally and, on the other, relocating has become a relatively widespread practice among early-stage and experienced researchers (Araújo 2007; Delicado 2011; Carrozza and Minucci 2014). In this respect, Kim (2009: 398) points out that *'there is a new type of mass movement of academics (especially researchers) crossing borders at the same time as a new mode of knowledge production'*.

Within the European Union, physical mobility is considered one of the strategic objectives, described as *'an essential element of lifelong learning and an important means of enhancing people's employability and adaptability'* (2009a: 3). More specifically, the mobility of academic staff is considered a positive force or a natural interaction contributing to excellence (European Commission 2014a). Even before the introduction of an open European Research Area (ERA), academic mobility was at the heart of the European institutions, therefore promoted through the set-up of specific 'Framework Programmes' (FPs) for research and technological development:

- the 'Human Capital and Mobility' heading (1990-1994): it is considered the first European activity aiming at facilitating academic mobility. It was part of the third framework programme (FP3) and focussed on the training and mobility of staff programme and the formation of networks (European Commission 2014b);
- the 'Training and Mobility of Researchers Programme' introduced under the fourth framework programme (FP4) and including the 'Marie Curie Fellowships', a special scheme providing grants for researchers wishing to receive training outside the country of their nationality (Morano-Foadi 2005);
- the 'Human Resources and Mobility' heading (2002-2006): it was part of the sixth framework programme (FP6) and introduced the possibility for researchers from third countries to undertake research in the EU and for EU researchers to perform research in a third country (*Ibid.*);
- always within the FP6, the 'Marie Curie Actions', created by the European Commission in 1996 and known since 2014 as 'Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions' (European Commission 2014b).

2.6.1 *Literature focusing exclusively on academic mobility*

As previously discussed, the mobility of academics has been traditionally included in the broader context of high-skilled migration and mainly investigated through the adoption of the traditional view, the 'circulationist' or the 'structuration' approaches. At present, the literature on the topic is often related to the above-mentioned context of internationalisation in higher education, higher education systems and public policies enhancing academic mobility (e.g. Fontes 2007; Horta 2010; Teichler 2015; Donina et al. 2015).

Partially following the suggestions offered by Maadad and Tights (2014) and Bauder (2015), contemporary literature on academic mobility can be split up into three areas of investigation, which however are often connected to each other. Set out below are some examples:

- (i) *Macro-level analysis and overviews on academic mobility*: in general terms, these studies offer a review of contemporary trends (e.g. Altbach 2004; Kim 2009) and current changes in patterns of academic mobility (e.g. Hoffman 2009). Some contributions reflect upon how academic mobility varies in terms of specific circumstances, such as labour market(s), job opportunities or earning potentials (Musselin 2004 and 2005; Bauder 2015), others challenge the entirely positive assessment of academic mobility, decreasing the emphasis on the fluid and neutral nature of academic mobility and propose a reflection on the diverse ways of *being mobile* (e.g. Fahey and Kenway 2010). A last set of studies highlight the role of public policies to enhance academic mobility and foster internationalisation processes (e.g. Horta 2010; Heitor et al. 2014).
- (ii) *Meso-level analysis on academic mobility*: these studies serve as a bridge between the macro and the micro levels of analysis and take into consideration the role of social relations and networks in influencing academics' choices (Millard 2005; Ferro 2006). A second important contribution to the meso-level analysis is played by a set of studies focussing on 'the expectation of mobility' (Ackers 2005a; Morano-Foadi 2005; Ackers et al. 2008; Coey 2013) and on the

prestige/reputation of higher education institutions (Mahroum 2000; Avveduto 2001).

(iii) *Micro-level analysis on academic mobility*: these studies favour a bottom-up approach and often focus on the experience of researchers moving to specific countries (or looking at the mobility from the perspective of the sending country). Supported by recent evidence, some of these authors follow an alternative approach to reduce the distance between the promotion of academic mobility as a value in itself (or a simple positive force) and its actual outcomes. (e.g. Gill 2005; Ferro 2004; Morano-Foadi 2005 and 2006; Beltrame 2007; Araújo 2007 and 2009; Delicado 2010a, 2010b and 2011; Carrozza and Minucci 2014; Masanet and Ingellis 2017). Other studies focus on gender and family considerations (Leemann 2010; Jöns 2011; Suárez-Ortega and Risquez 2014; Giorgi and Raffini 2015), age and career stage (Hoffman 2007; Guth and Gill 2008; Cantwell 2011).

2.6.2 *The macro-level: the 'global geographies of power/knowledge'*

Authors such as Ackers (2005a), Araújo (2007), Musselin (2008) and Cantwell (2011) have highlighted the necessity to 'embed' the discourse of academic mobility in its temporal and spatial context. As suggested by Hoffman (2009), indeed, different mobility patterns exist as well as diverse ways in which academic mobility is perceived. The present study fits into this context, adding that a broad understanding of academic mobility within Europe should not leave out the dynamics of knowledge exchange among different European geographies and the asymmetries existing even within the same country (Altbach 2004).

The number of international academic staff is, of course, numerically larger in some universities than in others, which justifies the emphasis of the literature on the mobility of researchers within a few countries. In Europe, much of the existing literature on the subject focus on the presence of international academics within the so-called blue banana (Brunet, 1989) and, more specifically, within UK universities (e.g. Mahroum 1999b; Ackers and Gill 2005; Khattab and Fenton 2016). Further, Kim (2010) has shown in a recent study that current flows of academic staff seem often shaped by intellectual

centre-periphery relationships. In line with the above, Fahey and Kenway (2010: 569) refer to both the relationships among European member states and knowledge exchange as follows:

Here we witness how position within geographies of power (economic and otherwise) and knowledge matters; in this case it is positionality within the European Union. Questions arise as to how national power within Europe influences the direction of the movement of knowledge, and as to how the travelling researcher is constructed within this power/knowledge geography.

Thus, if, in its more general sense, the European Union is to be considered a unified area aiming to enhance and preserve the status of magnet for talent discussed above, in practice, the position within this large geography still matters. When it comes to dealing with inner-European competition for researchers, indeed, inequalities among countries are still evident (Francovich 2000; Ackers 2005b; Welch 2008). In this respect, a recent study (Cairns et al. 2017: 36-37) discuss as follow the connections between the rising levels of inequality and the European neo-liberal idea of competition:

This leads us to ask, at a time when there are rising levels of inequality and a heavy emphasis on individualised forms of success, whether Europe's internal competitiveness strategy is really the best means of securing global success. The risk is that our educational policymakers have taken a wrong turn, advertising routes to a better life that do not necessarily lead to the desired destinations, since competition by its nature means that only the strongest survive.

Further on this matter, there is evidence (Ackers 2005b; Fontes 2007) pointing to the conclusion that less powerful areas and less prestigious universities – particularly in eastern and southern Europe – struggle to compete with the wealthier ones, hence researchers coming from these areas tend to be particularly mobile, relocating to a small number of European northern countries. In her data analysis on the location of fellows within the Marie Curie scheme, Ackers (*Ibid.*: 305-306) shows a great imbalance among

member states, with a few main sending countries characterized as '*net exporters*': Spain, Italy, Poland, Romania, Greece, to name only the first five.

In line with this latter study, several recent works challenge *de facto* the validity of 'brain circulation', especially when applied to the mobility of professionals and academics from the Mediterranean Europe (Milio et al. 2012; Triandafyllidou and Groupas 2014; Labrianidis 2014; Cenci 2015; Gomes et al. 2015; Masanet and Ingellis 2017; Sbalchiero and Tuzzi 2017). As will be further analysed in chapters four and five, the 2008 economic downturn and the subsequent application of austerity measures have been having a detrimental effect on southern European academia, both because of the cut in R&D funding and the lack of job opportunities, ultimately reinforcing the need for mobility among southern European academics. This is not to argue that the discourse should be inscribed in a simplistic national interest logic, but rather to encourage the adoption of acceptable solutions and therefore enhance a more balanced circulation of academic staff within Europe.

2.6.3 *The macro-level: academic labour market(s) in Europe*

In view of what has been stated many times in this chapter, universities and more broadly science appear to be international by their own nature. This seems to be all the more the case in Europe, as shown by the launch in 2010 of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and by the fact that the implementation of European policies orientated towards the promotion of academic mobility is becoming an imperative (Council of the European Union 2012).

Such a vision, however, is contradicted by Musselin (2004 and 2005) and Bauder (2015) who focus on the national orientation of academic labour markets in Europe and on their segmented character. Musselin (2004 and 2005) traces several divergences among national academic labour markets, suggesting that these discrepancies are playing a key role against an effective circulation of academics in Europe. The author grouped these differences in the following sets, providing a few specific cases for each group, which must be seen by way of examples and not limited to (Musselin 2004: 59-60):

- Different legal status of faculty members among European states: in France, the position of *maître de conference* (assistant professor) is permanent after a first year of probation. In Italy, tenured positions of researchers have been replaced by temporary positions. Similarly, in Germany, associates and assistant professors (*mittelbau*) are generally not 'tenured' either and need to go from one contract to another. In the United Kingdom and in Austria, the suppression of tenured positions seeks to give flexibility to universities in staff management. Even teaching duties seems not to be harmonised throughout the EU: in some countries tutoring of doctoral students is implied and in others it is not.
- Different wage situation among European states: this aspect refers to different wage levels and social benefits set out contractually in each EU country, but also to the possibility of negotiation, which is not foreseen in some countries (e.g. Italy, Portugal, France), whilst in others (e.g. the UK) there seems to be a margin of leeway at the institutional level.
- Recruitment period and procedures: Recruitment periods are different from country to country as well as procedures, which makes it difficult for candidates to explore and compare all options. Examples of that include: France, where vacant positions are published all at the same time and by national academic body and Germany, where the recruitment process must go, instead, through the approval of the competent ministry. In this respect, Anderson (2013: 277) adds that, in a few selected countries (France, Germany, Italy and Spain) '*entry level recruitment is subject to formal rules, usually only available in the national language, and some criteria are rather opaque and often difficult for foreign candidates to meet*'.

Summing up, Musselin (2004 and 2005) stresses that, even though some steps towards the harmonisations of national higher education policies have been taken, differences among European countries are still evident. In this respect, as we shall see in chapter four, scientific systems in Portugal, United Kingdom and likewise Italy are very different in nature and the policies measures adopted in the three countries seem to

respond to national political strategies, more than a rational of European unity. In conclusion, the wide differences emphasised by Musselin – in terms of national policies implemented, salaries, status, recruitment procedures, workloads, career patterns and promotion rules – do not facilitate intra-European academic mobility, which is why Musselin suggests addressing the issues as a matter of primary concern.

2.6.4 *The meso-level: networks, prestige/reputation and ‘the expectation of mobility’*

At the most general level, Granovetter (1973) theorises that, in certain situations – e.g. when a person is looking for a job – weak ties can allow for a more effective knowledge transfer than strong ties. More specifically, Granovetter’s argument is that by developing relationships with individuals that lie beyond the inner circle, an individual can get access to novel – or non-redundant – information. In line with the above, Faist (1997) suggests that social relations and social ties can play a relevant role in the migration decision making, by facilitating the access to specific information or providing information about opportunities abroad.

Focusing on the academic field, Millard (2005) notes that the existence of networks between institutions constitutes a crucial element in the mobility decision making and academic career building. Based on empirical evidence, the author demonstrated that the decision of *where to move* is often linked to existing networks or international collaborations between universities. Similarly, Ferro (2006) suggests the existence of a pre-mobility socialisation network in which *‘the aspiration to mobility’* is fostered. Finally, Avveduto (2001) points to the fact that, often, supervisors’ connections with colleagues working in other institutions influence the mobility choices of students. Overall, these studies suggest that academic networks (e.g. networks of colleagues and collaborators) and cross-border academic relationships are powerful means that can shape mobility decisions, since they enable access to information and resources.

As previously mentioned, a second important contribution to the meso-level analysis is played by a set of studies focussing on the ways in which features such as the prestige/reputation of a higher education institution can influence academics’ choices. In this regard, Mahroum (1999a and 2000) argues that scientists tend to enhance their credibility and recognition among their colleagues by joining highly regarded

institutions. Over time, these universities '*accumulate magnet power which gives them an advantage over others in attracting top talents*' (Mahroum 2000: 518). Thanks to the prestige and good reputation, some universities can increase both their access to resources (grants/general opportunities offered to academics) and their ability to attract new top scientists, in a mechanism that tend to give rise to '*new poles and satellites, centers and peripheries, within a particular space of science*' (Ibid.: 521). In her study on short-term international mobility of Italian Ph.D. students, Avveduto (2001) notes something similar, suggesting that, beside the quality of training, universities are increasingly considered attractive from their reputation.

Within the context of academic mobility, another relevant contribution to the meso-level analysis is that of the studies focusing on the so-called '*expectation of mobility*', which may operate as a mobility incentive. (Ackers 2005a; Morano-Foadi 2005; Ackers et al. 2008; Coey 2013). These studies point to the fact that mobility is increasingly becoming a sort of rite of passage or *something expected* of academics, since it is a widespread perception that academics' career can benefit from a period abroad. In this sense, they also question the common assertion (among both academic mobility theorists and policymakers) according to which there is a direct relationship between mobility and excellence (Ackers 2008: 415).

2.6.5 *The micro-level: academic mobility by choice and necessity*

In the context of a significant transformation in the European academic labour market(s), the forces standing behind academic mobility and the patterns of intra-EU mobility are becoming increasingly complex. This also means recognising that academic mobility is not exclusively driven by desire to reap the highest benefit or, at least, not always in the strict sense. For instance, the need for greater flexibility in academic recruitment is leading to the reduction in tenured positions and the multiplication of temporary – and therefore precarious – positions all over Europe (International Social Science Council 2010), ultimately acting as an incentive to mobility.

In this regard, Cantwell (2011) draws attention to some features often overlooked by mainstream literature, taking up three concepts developed by a few authors: '*accidental mobility*' (Musselin 2004), '*forced mobility*' (Ackers 2008) and '*negotiated mobility*' (Shachar 2006). The three concepts should not be conceived as

alternative means of defining controversial effects of academic mobility, but rather they should be taken together.

'Accidental mobility': in her study, Musselin (2004: 55) stresses the fact that, In Europe, most postdoctoral researchers conceive foreign experience as an effective strategy to improve their chances of recruitment in their own country. In other words, according to Musselin, increasing mobility of researchers within Europe is not an evidence of promotion in academic career, but it is rather determined by a series of circumstances in the national academic markets. In this regard, Cantwell adds (2011: 430):

[...] the many postdocs who cross borders within the EU do so to bide their time and lengthen their CVs in hopes of finding permanent employment at home. Likewise, the recruiters of mobile workers do not see postdocs as future colleagues but as term workers who fill immediate labor needs. In short, EU and national policies to promote mobility are largely compromised by entrenched academic traditions.

'Forced mobility': Ackers sets out this term in her empirical study (2008: 415-416) and, once again, attention is paid on intra-European academic mobility. Ackers critically discusses, on the one hand, the whole discourse of academic mobility as a specific policy goal to boost collaboration among higher education institutions and promote circulation of knowledge and, on the other hand, she assesses to what extent mobility adds a value to research activity.

Based on her study, Ackers shows that current academic mobility is not conceived to improve social mobility (better opportunities for upward mobility) nor excellence, but it is rather related to an insecure transition from job to job due to *'limited choice'* (Ibid.: 416). In this respect, the author refers to the normative pressure on internationalisation stated at the European level and to the fact that, in many cases, mobility is due to better paid jobs and opportunities outside home countries. However, unlike Musselin, Ackers does not believe that academic mobility will necessarily leads *'back home'*.

'Negotiated mobility': Shachar (2006) is a legal theorist and her analysis is focused on the power of attraction of highly skilled people played by immigration policymakers in leading destination countries – especially United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. Hence, emphasis is now being placed on the more traditional concept of competition for talents among countries. In this scenario, Shachar suggests that highly skilled migrants move from a country to another looking for improved employment and development opportunities (or economic reasons) in the destination countries, as well as *'something else'*. She describes this *'something else'* as follow (Ibid.: 116-117):

This "something else" is the search for a new home country that will permit them and their families to enjoy the security and prosperity that is attached to membership in a stable, democratic, and affluent polity (the citizenship factor).

Following this reasoning, the premium placed on *'secure and permanent membership rights'* (Ibid.: 115) – precisely the citizenship factor – which can only be offered by states, is higher for migrants moving from poorer to wealthier countries. Given the asymmetries among countries – the difficulty of less attractive countries in competing with the economic might of strongest ones – smaller jurisdictions have to provide *'incentive packages'* to knowledge migrants: a *'talent-for citizenship exchange'* (Ibid.: 116). In this case, mobility is not seen as *accidental* nor *forced*, but rather as a *negotiation* between the buyer and the seller within the global labour market aiming at attracting highly skilled migrants and, among them, academic staff.

2.6.6 *The micro-level: beyond 'the romance of academic mobility'*

The number of authors undertaking a bottom-up approach is growing rapidly (among them, Ferro 2004; Morano-Foadi 2005 and 2006; Araújo 2007 and 2009; Delicado 2010a, 2010b and 2011; Carrozza and Minucci 2014) confirming the need to challenge more traditional knowledge on academic mobility. On the one hand, the overall impact of such movements on the professional and personal lives of the people involved needs to be explored further and, on the other, a deeper understanding of

whether and to what extent mobility effectively contributes to excellence is recommended.

Ferro (2006) argues that any definition of academic mobility is associated with the idea that mobility is a selective – and thus competitive – process, suggesting that only ‘the best and the brightest’ can be mobile. Bönisch-Brednich (2010) puts forward a similar argument when suggesting that we should reflect on the tendency of idealizing academic mobility, proposing an image of the perfectly mobile and independent academic, which is not confirmed in real life. In line with this approach, Araújo (2007) and Carrozza and Minucci (2014) analyse, respectively, several Portuguese and Italian researchers’ mobility and career paths, revealing that their self-perception is often closer to a privileged migrant than a brilliant researcher. Following Ackers’ study (2008), Lawson and Shibayama (2013:2) point out that ‘*mobility appears increasingly detached from its original objectives and can be better viewed as a compulsory career step*’, often leading to job insecurity and fragmented career paths.

More generally, Welch (2008: 298) suggests the existence of a myth, according to which ‘*academic mobility is neutral, that there are no substantial cultural, economic and political dimensions*’. In line with this, Robertson argues that the issues mentioned above have been pushed into the background for too long, preferring to look at academic movements as *neutral* (2010a: 10):

There is a great deal at stake, however, for such movements are never, have never been, neutral. The romance of movement and mobility ought to be the first clue that this is something we ought to be particularly curious about.

Furthermore, Robertson (Ibid.: 7) suggests that more attention should be paid to the fact that the circulation of people and knowledge is often mediated by ‘frictions’ – as she calls them – or constraints generated and experienced by the academics moving from a place of academic knowledge production to another (e.g. constant negotiation of career opportunity; limited networks; being considered an ‘outsider’ after the relocation). In other words, what Robertson suggests is not to look at academic mobility as a smooth movement in space but rather a movement of people across social, geographical and cultural spaces, which shapes people’s identity and everyday life.

Likewise, Sheller and Urry (2006: 208) stress that social sciences have mostly approached and interpreted *mobility* (the movement of people, knowledge and goods) as:

A black box, a neutral set of technologies and processes predominantly permitting forms of economic, social, and political life that are seen as explicable in terms of other, more causally powerful processes.

To summarise, this attitude of openness towards the variety of situations that occur in real life appears to be necessary to overcome the gap between theoretical models and realities on the ground. Academics should not be considered as a homogeneous group of people deprived of identity, but active actors constantly defining – and negotiating – their position into the place they are living.

2.7 Conclusion

The whole chapter has sought to shed light on the many ways academic mobility has been defined and conceptualised from the 1960s to the 1990s and beyond, framing recent contributions within the broad process of internationalisation in higher education. To that end, more traditional and alternative concepts have been reviewed, recognising that the field of study is multidisciplinary, thus the narrative on the subject has been wide ranging.

Traditionally, the mobility of academics was included in the broader context of high-skilled migration and mainly explained through the so-called traditional view. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a new body of literature has emerged, as a response to the rise of new forms of mobility and the significant increase in the movement of people. These latter studies stress the fact that the mobility of high-skilled labour across nations is becoming increasingly circular and nation states are selectively affecting the composition of high-skilled flows through policies measures. Despite the extension of the interpretative framework, other authors have more recently pointed out that our current understanding of academic mobility is still limited, which is why additional analysis of the diverse forms, motivations and obstacles behind the mobility decisions of academics are needed. Looking at the case of intra-European mobility, this seems

surprising, as the mobility of students and academics is a priority in the European policy agenda (e.g. European Higher Education Area and European Research Area).

In conclusion, the many theoretical contributions examined in this chapter should be intended as complementary rather than alternative. In fact, since the mobility of the highly skilled and academics is a complex field of inquiry, it cannot be investigated and completely understood through one single theory, but rather by gathering together the insights offered by a multidisciplinary literature.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the research questions of the present study and reviews the methodology and methods used to collect and analyse the data. As will be described in the following sections, a mixed-method approach has been adopted and data has been collected through different techniques.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section includes a brief discussion of the purpose of this study, followed by the research questions that this project seeks to answer. Those questions are grouped into three areas of inquiry, for each of which a different data collection method has been chosen. The second section provides a justification for the choice of a mixed-method approach. Section three, four and five review the fieldwork activities carried out, going through every research stage and describing how and when data has been collected. Further, the main strengths and limitations are listed and an explanation of the main difficulties that arose during the fieldwork are presented. Finally, a last section is devoted to a broad discussion on the issues related to reflexivity and positionality.

3.2 Research questions

As stated in the introduction, this research is an attempt to take further our understanding for current academic mobility within Europe. It focusses on two different mobility patterns – the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon’s and London’s higher education institutions – and identifies their key features. The broad objective of the present research is thus *to explore the resemblances and differences between the mobility patterns of Italian academics who have been carrying out research activity or teaching at a university or higher education institution in Lisbon and London since 2000.*

From this general objective, and in support of it, the following specific questions are developed, trying to investigate firstly what is already known about the topic and then what remains to be studied (Creswell 2013). Those specific questions are grouped into three areas of inquiries and they are grounded on the analysis of the literature exposed in the previous chapter. As will be explained below, for each set of questions, a different data collection method has been chosen.

First area of inquiry. 'Data storytelling': exploring the contexts

- How did science and innovation policies evolve in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom, from the late 1990s onwards?
- How did Italian academics' presence in Lisbon and London evolve/change over the past two decades?
- How are they distributed across institutions, disciplines and employment functions, according to the latest available data?

This first set of questions allows a structured overview of the phenomenon as well as its necessary contextualisation. As highlighted in chapter two, indeed, there is extensive evidence showing that European universities' ability to attract academic staff is largely unbalanced (Francovich 2000; Ackers 2005b; Welch 2008). Doubtless, there is a gap between the attractiveness of Portuguese and British universities – and more specifically between Lisbon's and London's universities – which is why a straight comparison between the number of academics working in both places might not be so revealing.

Instead of a simple comparison in absolute terms, then, the secondary data supplied by DGEEC and HESA will be analysed over a representative period (since 2000/2001), focusing on their evolutionary trends. Further, data will be framed within the contexts of reference, taking into consideration a set of science policies and programmes implemented in Italy, Portugal and the UK since the late 1990s. Besides that, the large set of secondary data will be used, albeit with limitations, to adequately characterise the population of Italian researchers and university professors carrying out research activity or teaching in Lisbon and London higher education institutions.

Therefore, the analysis of both the available secondary data and HE national policies affecting the mobility of academic staff in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom will provide a better insight into the macro conditions and trends that can influence mobility choices.

Second area of inquiry. Exploring the reasons

- What are the profiles of the Italian academic staff based in Lisbon and London? (e.g. by age, sex, educational level).
- What are the conditions that have triggered or constrained their mobility from Italy towards the two cities?
- Why did these academics enter the Portuguese and the UK scientific systems?

In general terms, the second set of research questions allow us to test the accuracy of the main findings obtained through the analysis of the secondary data. More specifically, these questions aim to provide a better understanding of the drivers of mobility and location decisions. Key features of respondents' migration patterns are explored, together with their job expectations and impressions. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the most recent contributions on academic mobility seek to build a bridge between the traditional studies – describing academic mobility mainly as a unidirectional movement, induced by pull or push factors – and the literature that emerged in the 1990s – focusing on the circulatory or multidirectional nature of current flows and on the capacity of institutional bodies to influence the direction of the flows through the implementation of policies. This study follows this recent school of thought, providing new insights into the many variables that shape mobility choices.

Third area of inquiry. Fostering a collaborative dialogue and a critical reflection

- How do academics themselves describe academic mobility as a practice and what does being '*on the move*' mean to them?
- What makes Lisbon and London (un)desirable choices for a foreign-born academic?
- Plans and expectations for the future.

Finally, the third subset of questions will provide a follow-up on the results so far obtained. Simultaneously, it will allow us to explore these results more in depth by looking at Lisbon and London academic mobility's main traits through the lens of some of its protagonists. For this purpose, the first question is intentionally broad and aims to explore the point of view of respondents on the topic. The second and the third queries are intended to assess the attractiveness of the two cities as perceived by respondents, in the face of the challenges that both Portugal and the United Kingdom currently pose.

In this phase, respondents will be encouraged to share their opinions and ideas about academic mobility as a phenomenon in which they are all involved. Therefore, this represents the most creative phase of the fieldwork, the objective of which is to promote a constructive dialogue among the participants, engaging them into an active reflection on the topic.

3.3 Mixed method research

A mixed-method approach has been chosen to examine the key features and outcomes of the two academic mobility patterns, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The mixed-method approach arose between the late 1980s and early 1990s and during this time it has undergone through several phases of development (Creswell 2013; Johnson et al. 2007). Currently, it is fully recognised as one of the three research paradigms, that is quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method research (Johnson et al. 2007) and has become widespread in social science methodology. Following the definition provided by Creswell (2013: 4-5):

Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone.

Further, Jick (1979:603-604) points out that the use of different methods in a research may be seen as a creative process which can likewise lead to the discovery of new aspects to examine:

[...] triangulation may be used not only to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives but also to enrich our understanding by allowing for new or deeper dimensions to emerge.

The reason behind the choice of a mixed-method approach is twofold. At the most general level, it makes it possible to minimise the limitations of a simple quantitative or qualitative approach (Creswell 2013). A purely quantitative analysis, indeed, would allow the collection of estimates based on available data, but would fail to take into consideration the ways in which academics engage in physical mobility and interpret their experiences. Conversely, a simple qualitative research would not enable an accurate analysis of the contexts in which the phenomenon is inscribed.

In addition, it has been pointed out in the previous chapter that this is a field of enquiry drawing from different disciplines – such as sociology, political science, economics and geography – and therefore authors in the field of academic mobility tend to carry out data collection through a variety of methods. Therefore, a mixed-method approach seems to be the most appropriate strategy: it allows us to gain a broader understanding of the topic by comparing and incorporating different perspectives, drawing from primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data.

3.4 Research activity I: the analysis of DGEEC (Lisbon) and HESA data (London)

The fieldwork carried out for this research is based on a two-phase process: the collection and analysis of secondary data and a subsequent phase based on primary data, collected through two e-surveys, a world café hosted in Lisbon and six interviews conducted in London.

To find an answer to the first set of questions mentioned above, two sets of secondary data were analysed. Data analysis process involved a few steps, which are analysed below.

3.4.1 *Setting the framework*

The first step was to define both a relevant *geographical area* of study and a reasonable *timescale*. Concerning the first aspect, rather than focusing on the two countries as a whole, this study focuses solely on the presence of Italian academics in Lisbon's and London's higher education institutions. These seemed to be two reasonable spaces to explore, given funding constraints and the time available. It is also worth noting that this research is not part of a bigger project, which, of course, would have allowed a broader and statistically more significant analysis.

Concerning the latter aspects, the research enquiry spans approximately fifteen years. More specifically, the latest available year provided by the Portuguese source was 2011/2012, in the case of Italian Ph.D. holders, and 2013/2014 in the case of Ph.D. students, whilst the latest available year provided by the UK source was 2014/2015.

3.4.2 *Locating statistical data*

It is worth remembering at this point that I was looking for datasets on Italian academic staff carrying out research activity or teaching in higher education institutions in Lisbon and London. Therefore, this stage began by exploring the available data gathered by the institutions in charge of producing official statistics in Portugal – the *Instituto Nacional de Estatística* – and the United Kingdom – the Office for National Statistics. Since available data collected by the two agencies was over-aggregated, it was not possible to find information about individual nationalities. In fact, the more aggregated the data, the more invisible the people (McCaston 1998). Thus, attention was paid to determine which agencies conduct research and produce official statistics focusing on higher education in the two countries.

3.4.3 *Listing the sources and accessing secondary data*

In Portugal, this data is gathered by the Directorate General for Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science (*Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência*, DGEEC), whilst in the United Kingdom they are gathered by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

The DGEEC is a central service of the State, with administrative autonomy. It mainly collects the data related to my area of interest through surveys carried out at national level and a national register of Ph.D. thesis:

- (i) Survey on National Scientific and Technological Potential (*Inquérito ao Potencial Científico e Tecnológico Nacional* - IPCTN);
- (ii) Survey on registered and graduated university students (*Inquérito ao Registo de Alunos Inscritos e Diplomados do Ensino Superior* - RAIDES);
- (iii) National Register of ongoing doctoral thesis and completed doctorates (*Registo Nacional de Temas de Tese de Doutoramento em Curso e de Doutoramentos Concluídos* - RENATES).

The HESA is a charitable company operating on behalf of the government departments, but it is independent of them. It collects data directly from all publicly funded higher education institutions in the United Kingdom. More specifically, UK higher education institutions must report data to the HE funding bodies through specific queries and HESA helps them collecting and processing this data. HESA produces official statistics mainly related to the following sectors:

- (i) Students and graduates;
- (ii) Academic and non-academic staff;
- (iii) Universities and other higher education providers.

To get access to desired data, a custom request was sent to both agencies with my specifications:

- Number of academic staff with Italian nationality² carrying out research activities or teaching in HEIs in Lisbon and London;
- Evolution of stock data from 2000 to 2015;

² Therefore, those Italian born academics holding Portuguese and UK citizenship may have been excluded from calculation.

- Professional occupation within the university/HEI (e.g. professor, experienced-researcher, Ph.D. student);
- Name of the HEI in Lisbon and London where they are carrying out research activities or teaching;
- Academic field of competence.

Then, data analysts in Lisbon and London selected the most suitable secondary data available and, within a few weeks, data was available for reviewing.

3.4.4 *Collecting and grouping data: limitations and disadvantages*

Even though the datasets supplied included information that were part of official statistics and I expect them to be somehow harmonised – since they refer to the same population – making a cross-national comparison has not proved to be a straightforward process. As discussed in the previous chapter, the problems related to the use of different definitions and sampling methods between countries have long been known in literature, but the debate on how to overcome national differences in terms of data collection is still ongoing (e.g. Skeldon 2012; Teichler 2015). This case was no exception and data needed to be adjusted to ensure the most appropriate comparison.

The first problem encountered was that the Portuguese and the UK agencies covered the population of interest differently, thus deciding what information to collect and what to omit in diverse ways. More specifically, since the purpose of data collection was, of course, different than the one of the present study, not all the population subgroups of interest were available or getting access to all of them would have required an excessive cost. In fact, the fee required to get access to HESA data was quite high, which is why limiting as much as possible the number of subgroups of interest was necessary. The fee charged by the Portuguese agency, instead, was much lower and therefore DGEEC data proved to be a cost-effective way of gaining a broad understanding of my research questions.

As showed by the typology that follows (Figure 3.1), the DGEEC clearly distinguished between Ph.D. holders and Ph.D. students, whilst HESA (Figure 3.2) made a different distinction. Although a doctorate constitutes the first stage of an academic career, Ph.D. candidates are still students, which is why HESA do not includes them in

the ‘academic staff’ dataset, but rather in the ‘students, qualifiers and graduates’ dataset.³ Getting access to both the ‘Italian academic staff in the UK HEIs’ and the ‘Italian Ph.D. students in the UK HEIs’ datasets would have entailed excessive costs, which is why, ultimately, this gap could not be filled. This means that the secondary data supplied by HESA solely refers to the ‘academic staff with Italian nationality working in the UK higher education sector’. Within this broad category, information is collected by HESA in terms of the last qualification held by staff members (doctorate, other higher degree, other postgraduate qualification).

There is a second limitation that should be acknowledged. Since the enquiry spans over ten years, changes in the data collection and gaps occurred over this timescale. In the case of the data collected by DGEEC and, more specifically, in the dataset related to Italian Ph.D. holders, the year 2011 was missing because data was not collected in 2011. Furthermore, in the same dataset, also the years 2002, 2004 and 2006 were missing. This is because the Survey on National Scientific and Technological Potential (IPCTN) provided information on a two-yearly basis until 2007 and it only became annual in 2008.

3.4.5 *Analysing and comparing data*

The Portuguese data was analysed in Excel table and the UK ones in Excel’s pivot table, as supplied by DGEEC and HESA. As specified in the *Agreement for the Supply of Information Serviced* (HESA), the standard rounding methodology was applied to the UK data, to protect people from unauthorised exposure.⁴

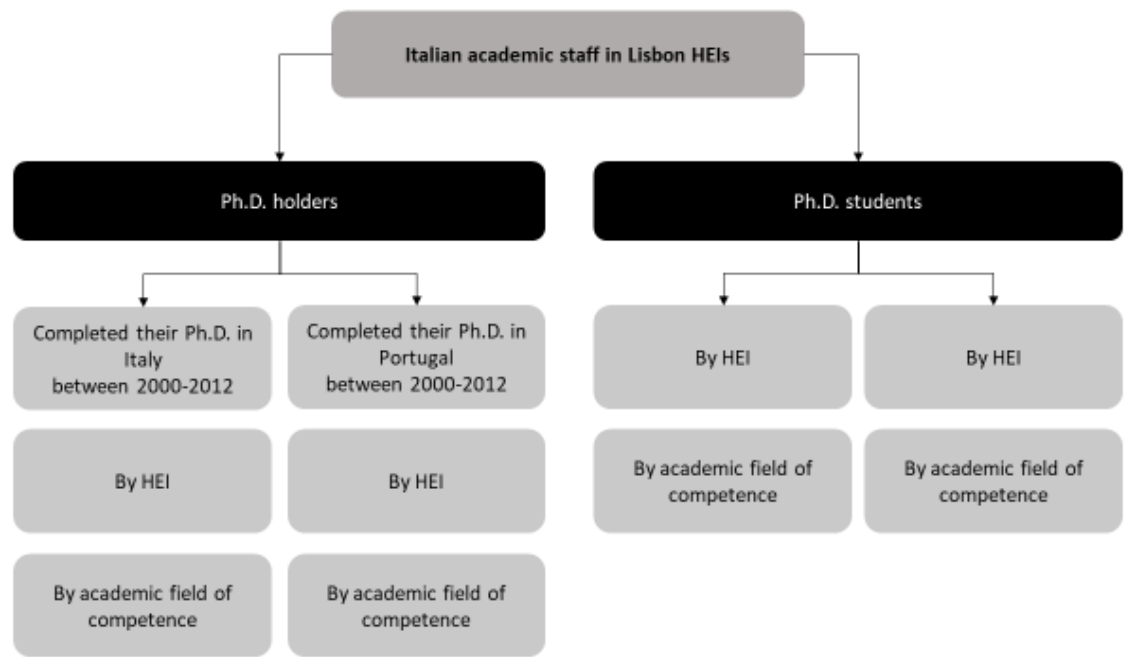
Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the two data platforms produced rich and meaningful findings. To produce less biased estimates and to ensure comparability, as far as possible, available data was broken down into a series of subgroups, based on available information. In this sense, all information contained in the typologies that follow (Figure 3.1 and 3.2) was used to produce estimates and to highlight key features of Italian academic mobility to Lisbon and London higher education institutions. As will

³ Ph.D. students are included by HESA in the ‘students, qualifiers and graduates’ dataset, with the exception of Higher Doctorates and Doctorates by Publications. Ph.D. students are only included within the ‘academic staff’ dataset if they hold a contract for teaching and/or research with a UK University, but it would not be possible to explicitly identify whether they are studying for a Ph.D.

⁴ Counts of people were rounded to the nearest multiple of five. No specification was provided by DGEEC, therefore the same rounding strategy was applied to the Portuguese data.

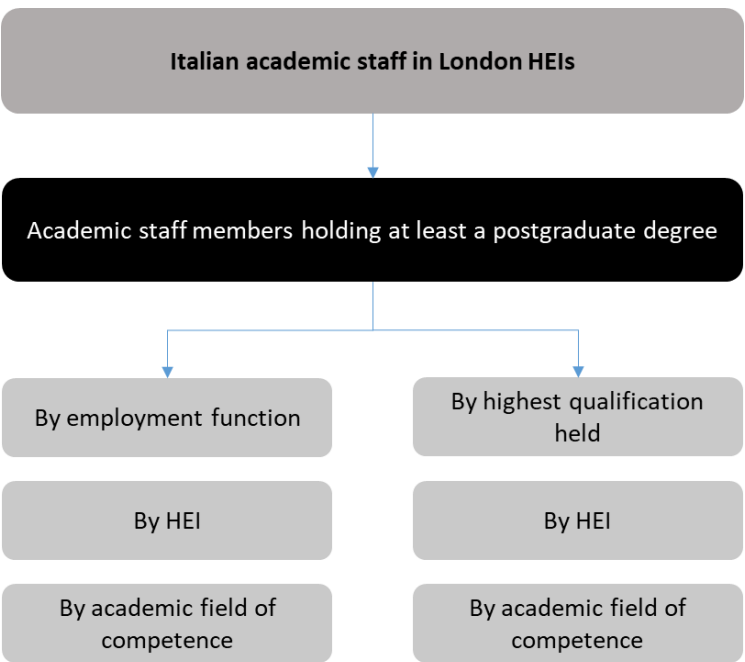
be discussed in more detail in chapter four, the analysis of the secondary data thus obtained was an important starting point, since it provided a solid background knowledge on the topic.

Figure 3.1 - Typology of Italian academics in Lisbon HEIs



Source: Personal elaboration based on DGEEC database

Figure 3.2 - Typology of Italian academics in London HEIs



Source: Personal elaboration based on HESA database

3.5 Research activity II: e-surveys in Lisbon and London

The second research activity was meant to build a bridge between the objective and subjective ways of knowing the topic (Creswell 2013). In this sense, to gain a better understanding of the subject, secondary data's results have been combined with primary data, collected through two exploratory internet-based questionnaires (e-surveys). As in the case of the previous activity, the second phase of the fieldwork involved a few steps, which are described below.

3.5.1 *E-survey: a rationale for the choice*

The two e-surveys were conceived following the example provided by the far more extensive e-survey on high-skilled migration in times of crisis launched in 2013 by the European University Institute (EUI), in collaboration with other universities in Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Ireland and involving a team of renowned scholars in the field (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014; Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2014).

As in the case of the aforementioned investigation, my e-surveys aimed at enhancing understanding of the topic by collecting primary data about who was moving and the drivers of mobility. Therefore, the surveys provided an idea of the nature of the mobility choices through a bottom-up approach. In this sense, they enabled a better understanding of the reasons behind the mobility decisions, the strategies used by respondents to defend their choices and their personal and job expectations.

3.5.2 *Designing the e-surveys*

The idea was to capture all the information needed trying to keep the e-surveys short, to encourage as many respondents as possible to fill them out. The e-surveys were created using Google Forms cloud services and written in Italian. At the top of both, a brief statement was included, explaining why I was collecting the material and reassuring respondents that confidentiality and anonymity would have been guaranteed. The questions making up the structured online questionnaires were both close and open-ended (see Appendices 1 and 2). Lisbon's e-surveys included 34 questions and London's survey 35, divided into the following five sections:

- (i) *general information*: this section included the information needed to draw-up respondents' profiles (e.g. age, sex, marital status, place of birth, citizenship(s), educational level and path, professional activity in PT and the UK);
- (ii) *migratory project/international mobility*: it included questions related to the motivations leading respondents to move from Italy to Lisbon and London, prior mobility experiences and expectations of mobility;
- (iii) *pre-departure organisation*: it included questions about the predeparture phase, the logistic support provided by friends, colleagues and universities;
- (iv) *inclusion, social networks, strong and weak ties*: following Granovetter (1973), Millard (2005) and Ferro (2006), the intention was to collect basic information about respondents' interpersonal ties and interaction with people in Lisbon and London;
- (v) *future perspectives*: it includes questions about the self-perception of their situation, the likelihood of future displacements, availability of appropriate funds and resources, impact of Brexit and future expectations.

3.5.3 Disseminating the e-surveys

To get the highest number of responses possible, the e-surveys were disseminated through websites, Google Groups, social media and through a selection of Italian names retrieved from the websites of several universities in the two cities. In Lisbon, the sources contacted were:

- *REDE MIGRA* – a network of researchers from different disciplines doing research in migration studies;
- the '*Istituto di Cultura - Lisboa*';
- the database on Italian academics with scholarship from the *Calouste Gulbenkian* Foundation;
- list of Italian researchers' names retrieved from the websites of the University of Lisbon (which includes several schools, among which the *Instituto Superior Técnico* (IST), the School of Economics and Management (ISEG), the Institute of Social Sciences (ICS)). Further, the Nova University of Lisbon (UNL) and the ISCTE-University Institute of Lisbon.

In London:

- the Association of Italian Scientists in the UK (AISUK);
- the 'Istituto di Cultura - Londra';
- the London Arts and Humanities Partnership(LAHP);
- list of Italian researchers' names retrieved from the websites of several universities: University College London (UCL), Imperial College London, King's College London, London Schools of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Queen Mary University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Middlesex University London.

Alongside this, a snowball sampling was applied, hence respondents were asked to recruit additional participants. It is however worthwhile mentioning that both samples are biased, due to the activation of personal networks.

Then, two databases were created. The e-surveys were tested with a small group of friends, to make sure there was no issue and the language was clear. Finally, they were sent to the lists of contacts by an email invitation. The number of e-mails of potential respondents collected were, approximately, one hundred and thirty in Lisbon and one hundred and eighty in London.

The online questionnaires were disseminated in two different moments: the e-survey related to the mobility to Lisbon was disseminated between March and July 2015, whilst the second one between January and May 2017. In both cases, a few respondents replied later, following the two reminders I sent out before closing the response period.

3.5.4 Examining collected data: benefits and disadvantages

The e-surveys drew responses from 136 respondents in total, 68 in Lisbon and 68 in London. This means that, approximately, 52 per cent of potential respondents in Lisbon replied and 38 per cent of those in London. Despite e-surveys have been in use for several years, the available literature on this methodology is still limited (Roztocki 2001). Additionally, diverse factors affect responses rates in an online questionnaire (Jansen et al. 2007), which means that it is difficult to know what to consider an adequate participation rate. Nevertheless, the participation rate obtained in both cities can be considered satisfactory, since it is in line with other e-surveys conducted on the

same topic (Sbalchiero, Tuzzi 2017). It is nonetheless important to stress that although significant, the samples obtained through the e-surveys were not representative, which means that any generalisation was carefully avoided.

Overall, there have been several benefits of using this approach instead of traditional face-to-face survey methods. Firstly, its limited cost, the fast response time, the easy transmission from a participant to another and the possibility to reach respondents living in various places. Further, it was my impression that respondents felt free to reply in a more open way to sensitive or private questions, since I was not present there. Finally, the e-surveys proved to be a particularly dynamic tool, allowing to analyse results in a very brief time.

Nonetheless, a few disadvantages were also associated to the use of them. In both cases, single users filled in the same e-survey multiple times. Hence, redundant e-surveys had to be excluded from the total number of valid responses. Alongside this, the questionnaires did not seem to be able to reach as many respondents as expected, given the long time they have been available. As pointed out by Roztocki (2001) this was possibly due to the passive and non-aggressive nature of the recruitment method, which means that I had to reach respondents who did not know about me nor about my project and made sure, only through the web, that they knew how important their replies were. This disadvantage was more evident in the case of London, where it has been more difficult to involve people effectively. Further, as a few respondents told me, the fact that I was not affiliated to a local university, in London, may have counted against me. Nonetheless, the two e-surveys have yielded meaningful results. As further detailed in chapter five, the findings were analysed in Excel.

3.6 Research activity III: world café in Lisbon and interviews in London

The third and last activity planned was to find an answer to the last subset of questions by hosting two 'world café', one in Lisbon and one in London. World café are useful tools creating collaborative dialogues among people and are designed and built around a few pre-determined questions (Brown and Isaacs 2005; Burke and Sheldon 2010; The World Café 2015; Estacio and Karic 2016). As stated above, the idea was to involve some of the academics who had already participated in the previous activity and

stimulate a conversation on Italian academic mobility, in an informal and hospitable environment, recreating the atmosphere of a café.

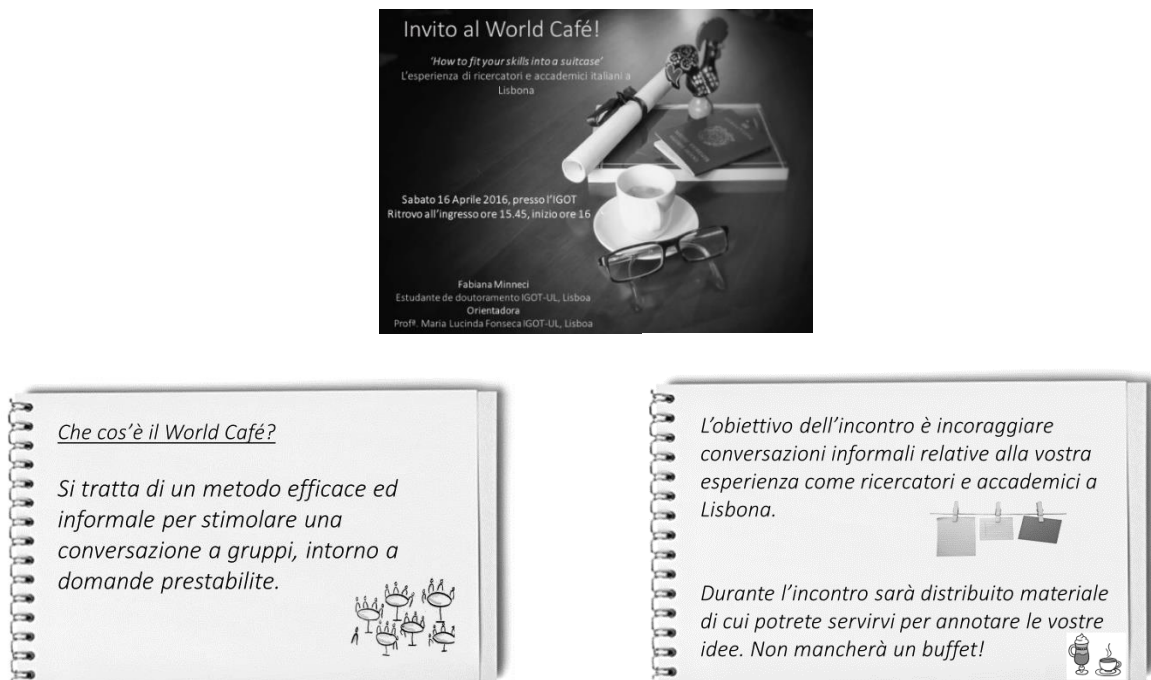
An important caveat needs to be added at this point, to say that, ultimately, only the world café in Lisbon was conducted. In London, a first world café was planned for the end of January-early February 2017, but finally it was not possible to carry it out, due to the limited number of participants. On May 20th, 2017, a second world café was planned. This time I chose to book a room in a café in London: 'The Canvas Café'. The café seemed to be the perfect location, since it is a nice and creative place, hosting private events like mine. To encourage people to attend, a catering package was included. Consent forms and information sheets were prepared, but ultimately not used. This time I received fifteen confirmations, but only seven people reconfirmed by e-mail a few days before the event. Unfortunately, and unexpectedly, only two of them showed up for the event.

To avoid frustrating the efforts made, two interviews were conducted with the people who attended. Then, because of the limited time and resources available, I chose to arrange and conduct other four individual interviews via Skype. In this sense, the study remained a fruitful mixed-method research, allowing for a close-up view of the mobility pattern to London, by exploring a few pre-determined issues and listening to the respondents' ideas about academic mobility as a practice .

3.6.1 The world café in Lisbon: setting the context

A follow-up email was sent to the Italian academics in Lisbon who had filled in the online questionnaire. In the same e-mail, an invitation to the world café was included, together with a few details about what a world café is (Figure 3.3). Nine people replied to the email, hence the event was organised: it was hosted on April 16th, 2016 at IGOT, lasting nearly two hours and a half, from 16 p.m. to 18.30 p.m., and the language used was Italian.

Figure 3.3 - Invitation to take part

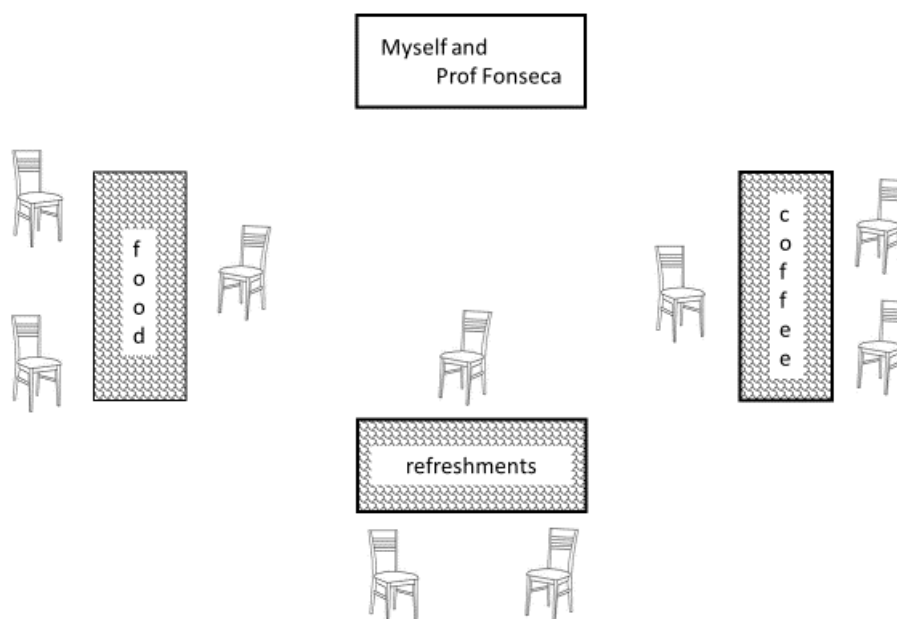


Source: Invitation to Lisbon's world café, in Italian

3.6.2 Creating hospitable environment and fostering a welcoming attitude

A large, quiet and hospitable room was chosen, and coffee and refreshments provided. Three tables were prepared for participants, each one with three chairs and white paper tablecloths to doodle on. On top of each table, coloured markers, pens and paper were placed. Professor Fonseca and myself were seated on a fourth table (Figure 3.4). The day of the event, people were warmly welcomed and asked to sit at the tables. Then, a brief presentation of my project and main results so far obtained was given, as an introduction and a warm-up time. Afterwards, participants were informed about the purpose of the event and the functioning principles: three questions were previously prepared for discussion and therefore three rounds of conversations of approximately twenty minutes were set up.

Figure 3.4 - Setting up the room: discussion tables



Source: Room layout. Personal elaboration

3.6.3 Discussion of predefined topics

The process began with the identification of a 'host' for each table, chosen by participants. In a world café process, the 'host' is a person who voluntarily remain seated at the same table at the end of each round of conversations, welcoming new people for the new round. His role is to encourage participants of the various rounds of conversation to build on the ideas emerged during the previous rounds, providing '*a continuum of ideas*' (Burke and Sheldon 2010:16). In our case, the hosts were asked to note main ideas emerged during the first round of conversation and share them with the participants of the second round. Then, the hosts had to repeat this process for round three.

During the first twenty minutes, participants were asked to discuss the questions prepared (each table had to discuss a different topic) and write main ideas down using all the material offered to them. The key questions to be discussed were the following, even though, during the discussions, other interesting issues have been brought up:

- (i) What does 'academic mobility' mean to you and what does it mean to be a 'mobile academic'?
- (ii) Why should a foreign-born researcher choose a higher education institution in Lisbon (and why he/she should not)?

(iii) Lisbon: a way-station on a longer journey?

My role was to encourage everybody's contribution and make sure key concepts and thoughts were effectively written down. At the end on the first twenty minutes, the hosts stayed at the same table, whilst the other two participants moved to another table. This process was repeated a second time to allow everybody to discuss each of the three questions. Then, each host was asked to summarise and share discoveries in front of everybody. With participants' permission, this last phase was recorded, allowing for a discussion between all participants and myself included. Finally, a conclusive ten-minutes discussion followed, both in Italian and Portuguese, giving the opportunity to thank everybody.

3.6.4 *Final considerations on the event*

A last e-mail was sent a few days after the event. People were welcomed to share their opinions and comments about the meeting. In general, the event produced two outcomes. Firstly, it made it possible to gather much detailed information in a short time. Respondents effectively engaged themselves with the topic and interacted with each other, feeling free to share personal considerations and reflections. In turns, this collaborative approach generated collective insights which were enriching for my research and fostered awareness among participants. Secondly, respondents seemed genuinely satisfied about the event and the friendly atmosphere. Ultimately, a little network was created since, apparently, they are still seeing each other.

Nevertheless, gathering together more people would have been desirable. Perhaps, the promotion phase needs to even more effective, trying to convince the most sceptical that such activity can be used as a useful and innovative research method, enabling a collective reflection about a subject of common interest (Estacio and Karic 2016).

3.6.5 *The Interviews in London*

The six interviews were conducted during May and June 2017: as mentioned, two of them were conducted at 'the Canvas Café', in London and the other four via Skype. At the time, I was living in Bournemouth and commuting to London, which is why,

ultimately, the last four interviews could not be conducted face-to-face. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the interviews and the use I planned to do with the information collected. Then, anonymity and confidentiality were once again ensured. The interviews lasted approximately one hour and a half and were designed to encourage people talk about the same issues explored in the world café hosted in Lisbon. In this sense, the broad topics to be explored were:

- (i) What does 'academic mobility' mean to you and what does it mean to be a 'mobile academic'?
- (ii) Why should a foreign-born researcher choose a higher education institution in London (and why he/she should not)?
- (iii) What will Brexit mean for British universities and for non-British academic staff?

The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions, giving respondents the possibility to fully articulate their responses. Of course, the interviews allowed the collection of several information but of a different nature, compared to those of the world café hosted in Lisbon. In general terms, respondents were firstly asked to elaborate further on a few issues they took into consideration in their e-surveys and then asked to focus on the topic mentioned above. In this sense, I could develop in more depth data collected through the e-survey and enrich this evidence with new material.

3.7 Reflexivity: the narrative of an insider?

Reflexivity has been defined in a variety of way, but it is usually understood as an evaluation of the ways personal bias may influence the research process and conclusion of a study.

The etymological root of the word 'reflexive' means 'to bend back upon oneself'. In research terms this can be translated as thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the intersubjective dynamics between researcher and the researched. Reflexivity requires critical self-reflection of the ways in which

researchers' social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact on the research process (Finlay and Gough 2003: ix).

Reflexivity is a process whereby researchers place themselves and their practice under scrutiny, acknowledging the ethical dilemmas that permeate the research process and impinge on the creation of knowledge (McGraw et al. 2000: 68).

Reflexivity also concerns researcher's assumptions about what they can know and how they claim to know it (i.e., ontology and epistemology) (Seganti 2010: 966).

The challenge of comparing two mobility patterns as different as Lisbon and London was further intensified by the fact that I am myself an Italian academic. Further I have moved three times in the past four years: firstly, to Lisbon, then to London, for a few months, and finally to Bournemouth, also in the United Kingdom. This means that I met the requirement to participate to my own research. As other researchers before me pointed out (Seganti 2010; Conti 2011), this also suggests that I had a closer engagement with my research topic. This situation might have led to a blurring of boundaries between me and my respondents. As an example, it happened that, during our conversations, a few respondents asked me to express my opinion about my own questions.

It is my feeling, however, that respondents tended to see me more as an *outsider*. In Lisbon, this was possibly because I have been speaking English instead of Portuguese during my first year and sometimes even after, which somehow influenced the relationship between me and those Italian colleagues in Lisbon who were already speaking Portuguese. Further, during an informal conversation which followed Lisbon's world café, several respondents did not seem to agree with my choice of writing my thesis in English.

In London, as argued throughout this thesis, many respondents seemed, understandably, particularly proud to be members of a well-known university, sometimes mentioning it as a satisfactory point in their professional career. The fact that

I was not affiliated to a local university and that I chose to do my Ph.D. in a ‘non-conventional place’ – as a respondent told me – has probably led most of them to think that we had not much in common, eventually.

Finally, during these last few years, I have been surrounded by other internationally mobile academics. To some extent this has gradually influenced me, in the sense that it has pushed me to consider geographical mobility as a *normal* practice for a researcher instead of just one of the possibilities. I remember that I became aware of that during one of my journeys back to Turin, discussing this issue with a friend of mine, an Italian academic living and working in Turin.

Summing up, everything that has been said in this last section is meant to emphasise that I am fully aware that my own background and personal stance may have influenced my decisions – namely, what to study – as well as my interpretations of the research topic. Nonetheless, I think that the reflections on my past experiences helped me to overcome – or at least to balance – some of the limitations due to the overlapping of the personal and professional sphere. Concurrently, of course, the diversity between my narratives and those of my respondents helped me to understand the issue by looking at it from different perspectives, avoiding incorrect conclusions simply based on my involvement.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided extensive information on the methodological frame of this study and the methods used. In summary, the adoption of a mixed-method approach proved to be the most appropriate strategy to explore and better understand the key features of the two mobility patterns in question. To follow-up the results of the first phase based on the collection of secondary data and explain further those results, a second phase based on primary data collection was planned. In this sense, the strengths of this research lie in the fact that the first phase is built on the second one, supporting, reinforcing and validating it (Creswell 2013).

Data has been collected through a combination of diverse techniques, to increase the reliability of the findings and to reduce, as far as possible, the limitations of each method. The first fieldwork activity carried out was the analysis of two datasets, supplied by the Portuguese *Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência* (DGEEC)

and the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Secondly, two e-surveys were created and disseminated in Lisbon and London, using Google Forms cloud services. The 136 answers received – 68 in Lisbon and 68 in London – yielded the desired results, even though the samples obtained were not representative and not all the potential respondents contacted ultimately filled in the e-surveys. Finally, a third activity was planned in the two cities. A world café was hosted in Lisbon and six interviews were conducted (both face-to-face or via Skype) with respondents based in London. Both activities allowed for a better comprehension of the secondary data collected and the e-surveys' responses, providing an opportunity to further explore the two patterns of mobility.

4. Characterizing the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London. A cross-national comparison

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. On the one hand, it attempts to provide an overview of the main improvements in the science and innovation sectors in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom from the late 1990s, framing them into the policy context of reference. On the other hand, it aims at exploring the main mobility trends and features of Italian staff in Lisbon and London higher education institutions from 2000/2001 onward.

Therefore, the chapter is divided into two key sections. The first section will introduce main scientific policies and programmes to foster research and innovation and promote the attraction and circulation of academics in the three countries, underlying their purposes, principles and main outcomes. In the same section, specific information referring to the R&D expenditure as GDP percentage in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom will be provided, together with the R&D personnel employed in the higher education sector and the share of public expenditure on tertiary educational institutions in the three countries.

Secondly, an overview of the mobility trends of Italian academics in Lisbon and London will be presented. Here, main changes between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015 will be analysed. Finally, considering the latest available data, the distribution of Italian staff across higher education institutions, disciplines and employment functions in Lisbon and London universities will be explored and compared. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this latter investigation is based on the analysis of two rich datasets supplied by the Portuguese *Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência* (DGEEC) and the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

4.2 Science policy in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom since the late 1990s

As mentioned repeatedly, moving from one country to another, even for a brief time, has become a widespread practice for academics. However, the fact that academic mobility takes place in a variety of contexts and forms can make it problematic to map intra-EU knowledge flows. More specifically, one should be mindful of the challenges that a cross-national comparison of data and policies involves. On the one hand, indeed, cross-country data are still limited and, despite some notable exceptions⁵ and ongoing European efforts to achieve data harmonization, differences in accounting methods and terminology can occur (e.g. the use of the same term for different concepts or, conversely, the use of different terms for the same concept). As the European Commission notes (2014a), this means that the comparison among member states is not a simple matter nor a straightforward process. Additionally, as will be outlined below, it should be considered that domestic policies and strategies supporting the research and innovation sector can serve different purposes.

As pointed out in chapter two, nation states and governments have been traditionally considered the key actors in shaping public policies for education and research (Musselin 2004 and 2005). However, this does not mean that supranational interventions have been absent. To cite an example, in Europe, the Bologna Process aimed at a progressive harmonisation and convergence of higher education systems through national reforms, to increase the competitiveness of Europe as a whole. Apart from the introduction of a common three cycle system – bachelor-master-doctorate – other relevant means have ensured greater convergence in national educational policies, such as:

- (i) the creation of the barrier-free European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA);
- (ii) the mutual recognition of qualifications;
- (iii) the approval and introduction of the ‘blue card’, allowing highly-skilled third-country nationals to work and live in all EU member states (excluding Denmark,

⁵ See, for example, RISIS project (Research Infrastructure for Research and Innovation Policy Studies).

Ireland and the United Kingdom, that do not participate in the ‘blue card scheme’);

- (iv) the implementation of European mobility programmes for students and academic staff;
- (v) the introduction of an Open Method of Coordination in the field of education (OMC), as an instrument of the Lisbon Strategy (Garben 2010; Huisman and van der Wende 2004).

In response to this, Robertson and Dale (2016) pointed to the fact that the national scale should no longer be considered the only unit of comparison when addressing existing policies and interventions in the field of education. Not only supranational bodies such as the European institutions can influence national policy agendas, but they can also support cooperation among member states towards a common and harmonised policy programme.

The convergence in the domestic and European policies, however, does not appear to be a linear and smooth process. The Bologna process is, in fact, a voluntary project of policy convergence, which means that member states are still largely free to cultivate their national interests (Garben 2010). Furthermore, the Commission has itself a direct interest in leading the process of policy convergence, to expand its power of action in the field of higher education (Ibid.: 224). As Corbett puts it (2004:12):

Governments want to use Europe to introduce domestic reform. The Commission wishes to extend its competence in higher education. University presidents want recognition. They each bring elements of the solution, as embodied in Bologna.

All this would suggest that, even though national governments are increasingly developing public policies that fit into the European agenda, divergences still exist both in terms of the approach used and the outcomes produced (Huisman and van der Wende 2004). *De facto*, this situation contributes to preventing a balanced circulation of academic staff within all member states. In the words of Huisman and van der Wende (Ibid.: 353):

Not only is the popularity (and status) of the national higher education system at stake, but also, and much more, the effects the disequilibrium has on the economic position of the country (brain drain).

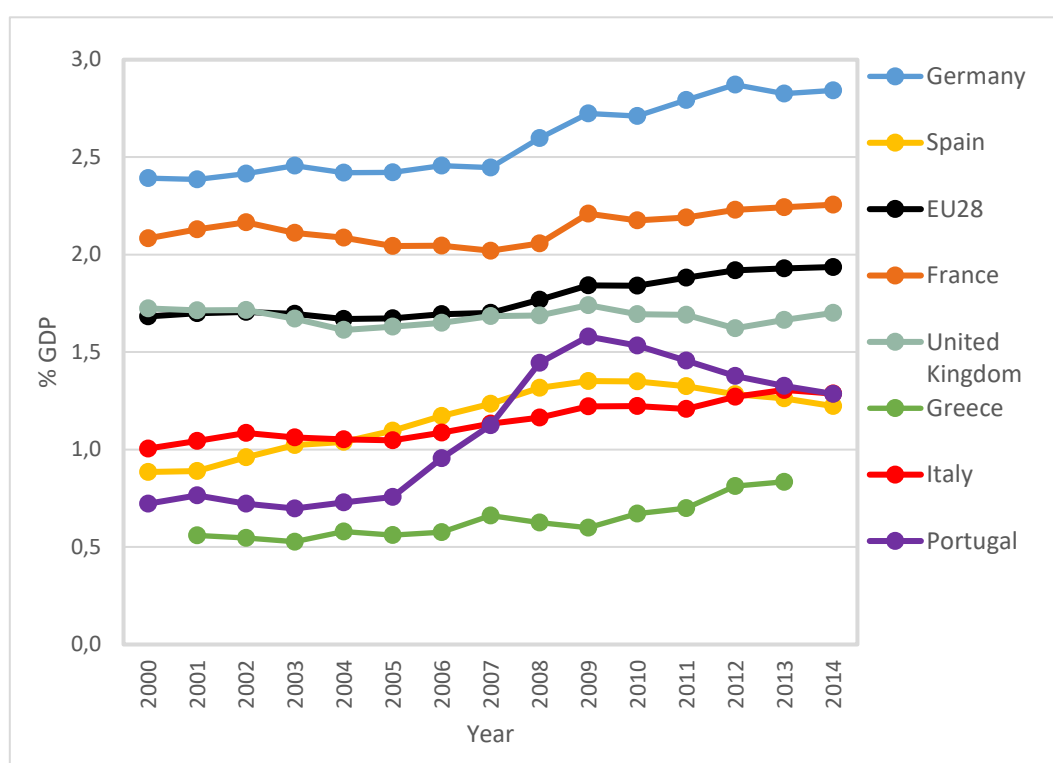
To give concrete meaning to this, in the following sections, main higher education policy options adopted within the timescale of reference – mainly since the late 1990s/early 2000s – in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom will be analysed.

4.2.1 Policy agenda in Italy

The national expenditure on research and development (GERD) – measured as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) – gives a relatively clear idea of the attractiveness of a country's science system. In this sense, in Italy, underinvestment in R&D is a well-known structural problem, compounded by further cuts in funding that began in 2009 in the so-called *fondo di finanziamento ordinario (FFO)*, a major state funding platform for Italian universities. Over the last fifteen years, the overall national expenditure on R&D in Italy has been slightly more than half that of other European countries represented in the G8 group and this gap has increased further in the last few years (Figure 4.1). The share of public expenditure on tertiary educational institutions also decreased sharply from 2005 to 2013, determining a gradual divergence from France and Germany (where public funding remains close or above 80 per cent), Spain (until 2010) and, sporadically, Portugal (Figure 4.2).

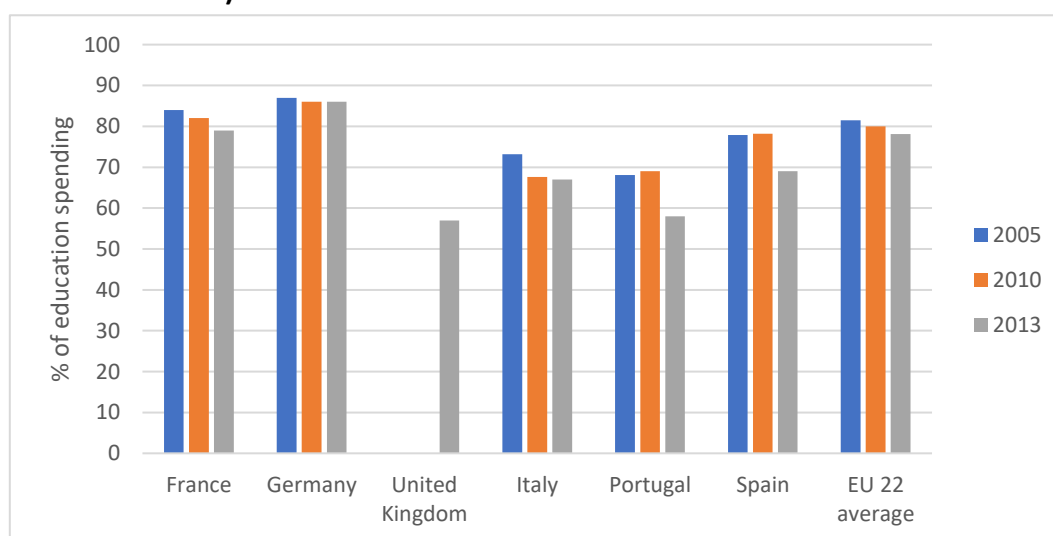
It is therefore not surprising that studies on academic mobility in Italy prior to the recent economic crisis (Morano-Foadi 2006; Beltrame 2007) highlighted that, among the reasons for leaving the country, push factors were still strong. Likewise, Beltrame (2007), Balduzzi and Rosina (2011) and Sbalchiero and Tuzzi (2017) showed that the singular nature of the Italian situation – compared to other European countries – is the inability to attract researchers from abroad, rather than retain them within national borders. More broadly, taking into consideration the macroeconomic framework, recent studies (Reyneri 2011; Palma 2016) indicated that the persistence of low technological intensity of the Italian production structure is affecting the demand for tertiary educated people.

Figure 4.1 - R&D expenditure as GDP percentage (selected countries)



Source: OECD 2016

Figure 4.2 - Share of public expenditure on tertiary educational institutions (%) (selected countries)



Source: OECD 2016

Over the last twenty years, the Italian governments have implemented prudent policies to deal with this issue, but to limited effect. A list of policy measures is outlined in the paragraphs below; this is not intended as a comprehensive picture of every measure adopted to support the Italian scientific system, but rather it highlights the features of the main measures implemented and their intended policy purpose.

In 2001, the Italian Minister for Higher Education and Research, Ortensio Zecchino, introduced the first 'brain drain' reversal programme. The Ministerial Decree N. 13 January 26th, 2001 was developed from the 2000 'Berlinguer reform' and the 2003 'Moratti reform'. The intent of this programme – an example of what Lindsay Lowell (2002) called a return policy – was to facilitate the return of Italian researchers and experts from abroad and to encourage foreign scholars to work in Italy, reversing Italian unidirectional outflows.

Having worked for at least three years abroad as a researcher was one of the preconditions to submission. With a contract of a minimum of six months and a maximum of three years, fellows were required to cover both research and teaching activities. Their salaries, paid by the ministry, were adjusted to European standards. Beltrame (2007) and Milio et al. (2012) considered that the results of this programme have been quite disappointing, as only 466 researchers – around 300 of whom were Italians – decided to move to Italy. Alongside this, the researchers who came back were mainly scientists and engineers and there were too few social scientists and humanists. Given the weak performance of the programme, in 2006 former President Berlusconi decided to suspend funding for it. In 2009, the programme started once more, with a different name '*Giovani Ricercatori Rita Levi Montalcini*', but once again with limited success.

In 2003, the government decided to support the construction of the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT), a scientific organisation administrated by a foundation with scientific and administrative headquarters in Genoa and Rome. The institute was modelled on the well-known MIT and was intended to promote scientific research in Italy and facilitate interaction with industries. Hence, the return policy mentioned above was combined with a retention policy (Lindsay Lowell 2002). Academics and experts, however, (Beltrame 2007; Milio et al. 2012) challenged the significant allocation of funds that could have been used to support existing research centres and the low efficiency of scientific production in the centre.

A third political measure named '*controesodo – talenti in movimento*', or 'counter exodus – talents in motion' was proposed in Italy in 2008 as a project sponsored by two deputies of the Democratic Party, William Vaccaro and Alessia Mosca. Launched in 2010, '*controesodo*' became law in December 2010 and operational in 2012 (Law

238/2010). The aim was to try to tempt Italian graduates who had left the country to come back, but also to encourage the entry of EU graduates with prior experience in Italy. These graduates benefited from a 70 per cent tax relief on their salary, for men, and 80 per cent for women, for the first three years. According to *Repubblica degli stagisti*,⁶ from 2010 to 2015 this law attracted approximately 10 thousand Italian graduates, which is not a disappointing result in itself, but still not a long-term contribution to the resolution of the issue. In early 2015, the opportunity to use these tax benefits was extended until the end of 2017, but in September 2015, this extension was abolished and the conditions for entitlement changed,⁷ creating confusion and uncertainty. In late 2015, new changes were made, to the effect that all the graduates who had moved back to Italy before the end of 2015 could choose which system to adopt, whilst new terms were applied to those moving back after 2015.

Further, in late 2010, Italian Parliament approved a comprehensive higher education reform (Law 240/2010 or 'Gelmini reform'). Among the various changes, whose complete analysis is beyond the scope of this chapter,⁸ the governance and organisation of universities was modified, shifting from the Academic Senate towards the Rector and the Board; the Italian '*facoltà*' were suppressed; department roles were enhanced and rules for recruitment changed (Rossi 2014). Concerning the recruitment issue, which still is a matter of considerable controversy within Italian academia, three-year temporary positions have been introduced, replacing the former status of tenured researcher (Donina et al. 2015). These positions can be extended only once, for two years, and the new status applies only to new entrants (Ibid.: 15). Ultimately, cuts in funding and the new recruitment selection procedures have the perverse effect of preventing – or strongly penalising – new hires, instead of ensuring a continuous academic staff turnover. To summarise, the increased precariousness in young researchers' career – particularly the difficulty to secure a job position in academia and then moving up to a professorship position – seems to be a structural problem that is becoming increasingly difficult to overcome.

⁶ See Eleonora Voltolina, 'Legge Controesodo, girandola di emendamenti: l'Italia manterrà la parola sugli incentivi o tradirà gli expat rientrati?', *Repubblica degli Stagisti*, November 19, 2015. <http://www.repubblicadeglistagisti.it/article/expat-pasticcio-legge-controesodo-emendamenti>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

⁷ Tax relief was reduced to 30 per cent for everybody, but extended to any graduate (not only to those under 40 years of age) having worked abroad in the last five years, with a five-year default duration from the return date.

⁸ For a comprehensive analysis see, for example, Donina et al. (2015).

In relation to the wider debate about Italian policies addressing the outflow of academics, a few considerations are worth noting. The first is that the entire spectrum of policies looks like a series of one-off initiatives instead of a long-term answer to the problems of the scientific system, namely the chronic underfunding and the structural difficulty of incorporating a younger generation of researchers. As pointed out by Beltrame (2007), these measures look like a policy response to the public alarm over the issue of ‘brain drain’, more than coherent and coordinated corrective measures. These are ‘*networks without nodes*’, in the words of Milio et al. (2012: 36). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the Italian governments’ efforts have mainly been directed at stopping the outflow of Italian highly skilled people, rather than promoting the attraction of researchers and professionals of any nationality. Furthermore, as Palma (2016) pointed out, given the low technological intensity of the Italian production innovation structure, tax incentive policies alone are ineffective unless accompanied by proper industrial policies to develop and foster innovation systems and proper funding for research activities.

Since mid-2016, the attention shifted to cases of corruption and nepotism within Italian universities. The scientific community and public opinion seem to be split in two. On the one hand, there are those who feel that the roots of various problems in Italian academia lie in its widespread corruption.⁹ On the other hand, there are those drawing attention to the growing tendency to shift the problem from the political sphere to personal ethics and suggesting that, although corruption and nepotism do exist and are deeply regrettable, they should not be addressed as the main cause for ‘brain drain’.¹⁰

⁹ See Redazione Scuola, ‘Università Cantone: “Stretto legame tra corruzione e fuga dei cervelli”’, Corriere della Sera, September 23, 2016. http://www.corriere.it/scuola/universita/16_settembre_23/universita-cantone-stretto-legame-corruzione-fuga-cervelli-4a52567c-8190-11e6-bb54-ccc86a7805dc.shtml. (Accessed November 3, 2017).
 Maria Novella De Luca, ‘Ricercatore a Londra: “Io cervello in fuga e la battaglia persa per tornare in Italia”’, La Repubblica, September 25, 2016.
http://www.repubblica.it/scuola/2016/09/25/news/l_intervista_dopo_la_denuncia_di_cantone_parla_un_professore_associato_a_londra_che_non_riesce_a_ottenere_un_posto_da_r-148474122/?ref=HREC1-11. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

¹⁰ Silvio Paone, ‘Fuga dei cervelli, corruzione e nepotismo: come la politica nasconde le sue responsabilità’, ROARS, October 17, 2016. <http://www.roars.it/online/fuga-dei-cervelli-corruzione-e-nepotismo-come-la-politica-nasconde-le-sue-responsabilita/>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

Giuseppe Mingione, ‘Atenei corrotti? I nostri in fuga per i pochi fondi’, Corriere della Sera, September 26, 2016. http://www.corriere.it/scuola/universita/16_settembre_26/universita-corrotte-nostri-cervelli-fuga-dall-italia-pochi-fondi-cantone-cdee121e-83bb-11e6-b7a9-74dcfa8f2989.shtml. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

These latter scholars used available data¹¹ to demonstrate that nepotism affects Italian academia only to a limited extent. Similarly, other academics question the dominant role of corruption in academia, suggesting that the perception of researchers themselves about irregularities within universities might be exacerbated. They point out that the sharp contraction of available positions in universities very often results in heightened competition between equally deserving candidates. Due to the limited number of available positions, many of these candidates remain frustrated in the final stages of competition and, thus, may tend to over-estimate the level and degree of corruption.¹²

To sum up, episodes of corruption and nepotism exist in Italian academia, weakening the proper functioning of the scientific system and undermining confidence in academics and public opinion. This is a set of pervasive bad practices that should always be reported and vigorously opposed. However, further quantitative studies need to be carried out to better understand the extent and degree of the phenomenon. On the other hand, there should be sufficient courage to avoid oversimplification and stereotypes, as corruption and nepotism are more likely to be one of multiple reasons for academics leaving the country. Further, as long as available resources for research activities are scarce and concentrated on a limited number of institutions and people, it is very likely that cases of corruption will increase, with the risk of perpetuating a vicious cycle.

Francesco Sylos Labini, 'L'università italiana non è tutta da buttare', *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, April 25, 2012. <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2012/04/25/luniversita-italiana-tutta-buttare/207626/#.T5ts1Mcxr0w.blogger>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

Giuseppe De Nicolao, 'Università: ciò che Bisin e De Nicola non sanno (o fingono di non sapere)' *ROARS*, April 13, 2012. <http://www.roars.it/online/universita-cio-che-bisin-e-de-nicola-non-sanno-o-fingono-di-non-sapere/>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

¹¹ Stefano Allesina, 'Measuring nepotism through shared last name: the case of Italian academia', *PLoS One*, August 3, 2011. <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0021160>. (Accessed November 3, 2017). Marco Bella, 'La causa della fuga dei cervelli sono i tagli, non il nepotismo', *ROARS*, October 5, 2016. <http://www.roars.it/online/universita-la-causa-della-fuga-dei-cervelli-sono-i-tagli-non-il-nepotismo/>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

Giuseppe De Nicolao, 'La bufala delle omonimie in cattedra', *ROARS*, September 25, 2016. <http://www.roars.it/online/la-bufala-delle-omonimie-in-cattedra/>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

¹² See, for example, Andrea Bellelli, 'Università, non c'è solo corruzione nei nostri atenei', *Ilfattoquotidiano.it*, September 26, 2016. <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2016/09/26/universita-non-ce-solo-corrruzione-nei-nostri-atenei/3057425/>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

4.2.2 Policy agenda in Portugal

Portugal is facing structural problems in its economy – above all high private sector and government debt – that are no less significant than Italy.¹³ The labour market is segmented (European Commission 2015) and unemployment is high: in 2016, total unemployment rate in Portugal was 11.2 per cent and 11.7 per cent in Italy.¹⁴ In 2016, youth unemployment rate was 27.9 in Portugal and 37.8 in Italy.¹⁵ Between May 2011 and June 2014, then, Portugal received financial assistance from the EU and IMF through the Economic Adjustment Programme.

Despite difficult macroeconomic conditions, in terms of R&D incentives, Portugal has experienced a virtuous period in recent past, which presumably would not have been possible without the forward-looking political vision of Minister José Mariano Gago (Heitor et al. 2014). In fact, in Portugal, the expenditure on R&D activities as a percentage of gross domestic product increased steadily between 2006 and 2010 (Figure 4.1) together with the number of researchers in the higher education sector (Figure 4.3). Horta and Blasi (2016) pointed out that, even if fluctuating, until 2010 Portuguese expenditure in R&D grew at one of the fastest rates of all OECD countries. Investments in R&D in Portugal rose from 0.7 per cent of Portuguese GDP in 2000 to 1.5 per cent in 2009 (Figure 4.1), making it the only southern European country significantly shortening distances between south and north Europe.

There is little to celebrate, however, as since 2010 or shortly after the economic crisis, southern European countries have started cutting back on public research activities funding, reopening a wide gap (Figure 4.1). Nonetheless, Heitor and Horta (2012) believe that the fluctuating trend of investments shows that the Portuguese system has not reached scientific maturity yet: *'it is more appropriate to regard*

¹³ The stock of private sector debt in percentage of GDP in 2015 was 115.3 in Italy and 179.7 in Portugal. Eurostat website. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tipspd20&plugin=1>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

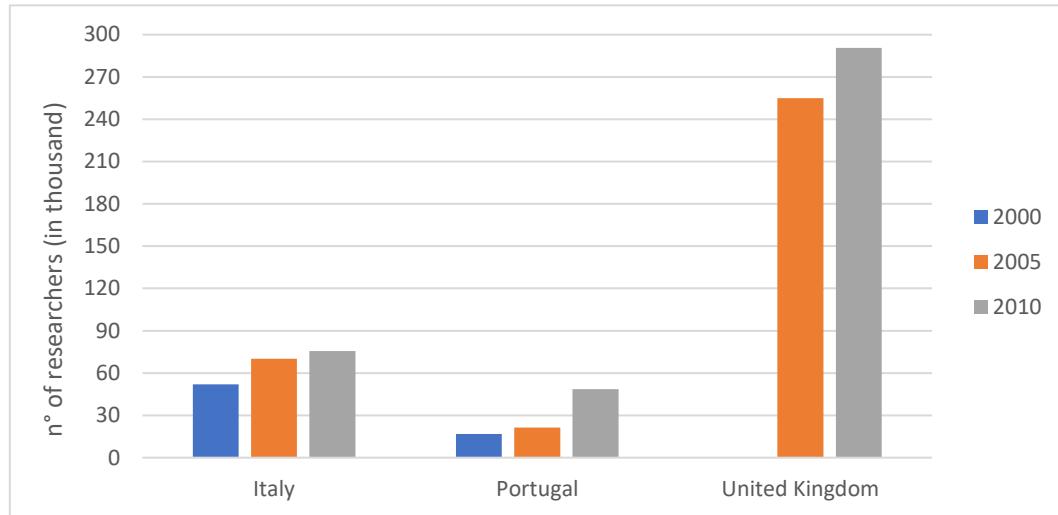
The general government gross debt in percentage of GDP in 2016 was 132.0 in Italy and 130.1 in Portugal. Eurostat website. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdde410&plugin=1>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

¹⁴ Total unemployment rate as a percentage of active population (people aged 15 to 74). (Eurostat website). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tsdec450&language=en>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

¹⁵ Youth unemployment rate (people aged 15-24) as a percentage of the youth labour force. OECD website. <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/youth-unemployment-rate.htm>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

investment as further step in the recovery from a late awakening and a slow – often intermittent – move along the path to maturity’ (Ibid.: 195).

Figure 4.3 - Total researchers in the HE sector (headcount)



Source: Eurostat

José Mariano Gago has been a minister in two periods of time: the first time as Minister of Science and Technology (1995-2002) and the second time as Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education (2005-2011). Albeit with limitations, he has managed to implement an ambitious internationally oriented reform programme, *‘fitting the European agenda towards converging systems of higher education’* (Huisman and van der Wende 2004: 355). As will be described below, there have been two main lines of action: a special look at Europe and the former colonies – the *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP) – and a significant increase in R&D investments. In the case of the EU, the idea was to foster common European citizenship, encouraging exchange between Portugal and other EU countries, while in the case of the CPLP, efforts were made to stimulate cooperation within the ‘Lusophone space’ (Seixas 2013). Over fifteen years, several public measures were implemented, giving Portugal a more modern research system, integrated with that of the EU and breaking the isolation that the country was suffering (Horta and Blasi 2016).

To understand the full scope of action in main scientific policies and programmes adopted, it is worth framing the context in which they have been designed, briefly illustrating how the Portuguese Science and Technology system (S&T) has developed. Previous studies (Heitor and Horta 2012; Heitor et al. 2014) have shown that the

evolution of S&T in Portugal can be divided into four periods, starting from the late 1960s. In these two studies, the authors recall that until 1974 the country was under the authoritarian political regime *Estado Novo*, which was averse to scientific knowledge and lacking an integrated S&T system. The following is thus a summary of main achievements accomplished in each of the four periods.

- (i) *Period 1967-1985*. The first attempt to set up a system of science planning took place in 1967, when the national Advisory Board for Scientific and Technological Research (*Junta Nacional de Investigação Científica e Tecnológica – JNICT*) was created to plan, coordinate and promote scientific and technological research in the country.
- (ii) *Period 1986-1995*. The Portuguese S&T system was established in 1986, when the country joined the European Union and then, in full, during the 1990s. (Heitor and Horta 2012). Openness and internationalisation began to be a primary focus of the Portuguese government's attention. Several programmes were implemented, supported by the European structural funds. In addition, Portugal's entry into the European Union ensured access to prestigious international organisations, such as the *Centre Européen de Recherche Nucléaire* (CERN) and the European Space Agency (ESA) (Heitor and Horta 2012).
- (iii) *Period 1995-2005*. In 1995 the Ministry of Science and Technology (*Ministério da Ciência e Tecnologia*) was created. Two years later, in 1997, former national Advisory Board for Scientific and Technological Research (JNICT) split into three organisations. The Foundation for Science and Technology (*Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia – FCT*), which is still the main public funding agency of Portugal; the Observatory of Science, Technologies and Qualifications (*Observatório da Ciência, Tecnologia e das Qualificações*) and the Institute for International, Scientific and Technological Cooperation (*Instituto de Cooperação Científica e Tecnológica Internacional - ICCTI*), both of which no longer exists. These were respectively responsible for gathering and publishing statistical data and coordinating international cooperation activities in the field of science and technology.

(iv) *Period 2006-2010*. As Figure 4.1 shows, the main goal achieved in this period concerns the increase in R&D investment. Portuguese expenditure on research and development (GERD) strongly increased between 2005 and 2010, reaching historic levels. In 2006 the 1 per cent of GDP invested in R&T was reached and, as a result, Portuguese universities' capacity for training and to attract researchers increased considerably (Heitor and Horta 2012).

As mentioned above, efforts to support R&D activities in Portugal became particularly relevant after the 1990s (Ruivo 1995). Internationalisation of the system and growth in investments were recognised as priority actions by the Portuguese government and the European structural funds provided part of the necessary financial support. The creation of the Ministry of Science and Technology (*Ministério da Ciência e Tecnologia*) in 1995, headed by José Mariano Gago, was one of the most relevant public policies implemented in Portugal, since, for the first time, science, knowledge and technology became issues of prime concern (Horta and Blasi 2016). Two years later, the FCT – the main public funding agency in Portugal – was created to replace most of the work of the JNICT.

The FCT financially supports academic activities in all fields of study through calls for individual doctorate and post-doctorate fellowships, calls for research teams and research units. The FCT was essentially created to bring international standards to the Portuguese science base. Since its inception in 1997, international experts have been periodically assessing Portuguese research units, following a list of criteria that mainly refers to academic activities undertaken and research strategies for the future six years (FCT Evaluation of R&D Units, 2013). Similarly, a group of Portuguese and non-Portuguese evaluators, whose names are published on the FCT site, have assessed applications submitted by individuals, research teams or institutions, ensuring quality standards and greater transparency in the selection process.

In the past two decades, the FCT has supported scientific activity in Portugal through a range of different programmes. For the purpose of this study, we will focus solely on three programmes, all conceived to achieve specific political goals: Ph.D. direct fellowships, post doctorate fellowships and the *Ciência* programme. Ph.D. direct fellowships funded by the FCT are designed to financially support doctoral students of

any nationality in their activity. These fellowships be spent in Portugal, abroad or partially in Portugal and abroad (mixed). Fellowships can normally be renewed for up to four years and fellows benefit from monthly stipends, supplementary support to attend conferences/travel abroad and full or partial payment of tuition fees, which, as pointed out by Horta and Blasi (2016), encourages students to study abroad.

Horta and Blasi (2016) pointed out that, from 2006 to 2010, the number of FCT Ph.D. scholarships given to foreign students has increased significantly.¹⁶ The increase in the attractiveness of Portuguese universities was due to the number of scholarships available (Delicado 2010a) and, possibly, to the adoption of an international evaluation, which has increased Portuguese universities' visibility abroad. Further, Horta and Blasi (2016) argued that, until 2000s, the number of fellowships to be spent completely abroad was higher than that of the mixed fellowships but, after year 2000, the number of mixed fellowships has gradually started to increase. As José Mariano Gago predicted (1990) – and Horta and Blasi (2016) and Delicado (2010a) have since taken up – this shows that up to the 2000s the internationalisation of the system was stronger, since Portuguese universities were still not sufficiently prepared to offer proper quality standards for research programmes nor to provide an adequate number of qualified academic staff. Gradually, universities and research units reached those standards, the number of academic staff began to level off and, accordingly, the number of Ph.D. fellowships spent fully abroad gradually decreased.

Therefore, until the 2000s, the political momentum aimed to grow Portuguese universities' ability to offer doctoral degrees with European standards. Once this goal was achieved, the political agenda shifted to another objective: strengthening internationalisation and promoting the circulation of researchers (Horta and Blasi 2016). To a certain extent, the increase in the number of FCT direct post-doctoral fellowships that began in the 2000s responded to these specific needs. Indeed, the idea was to enable the attraction of foreign doctors and allow early stage researchers interested in pursuing an academic career to get a postdoctoral fellowship (Ibid.). Even in this case, international mobility was strongly encouraged, since postdoctoral fellows could, and still can, apply for a fellowship abroad or a mixed one.

¹⁶ From 1995 to 2005 only 7 per cent of FCT's individual fellowships were awarded to non-Portuguese students, while from 2006 to 2010 the percentage of non-Portuguese FCT's fellows was 11 per cent (Horta and Blasi 2016).

Over time, the need arose to evolve from fellowships to contracts, trying to promote a university career path and renew the academic staff inside Portuguese universities (Horta and Blasi 2016). It must be stressed, however, that this is still a far-off objective. As pointed out in a recent study (Cairns et al. 2017), Portuguese academia is still characterized by a ‘dual labour market philosophy’, with a massive gap between a small number of principal investigators and a second group of younger researchers living in a precarious and insecure work status, *‘based upon a succession of temporary positions, linked tenuously via a form of continuity that ultimately rests upon supporting the career of the more senior colleague’* (Ibid.: 151).

The *Ciência* programme was open to mid-career researchers wishing to be contracted. More specifically, this programme started in 2007 and aimed at attracting promising postdoctoral researchers, both Portuguese or foreign nationals. The purpose was that of recruiting 1,000 researchers through up to 5-year contracts. Further, all applicants were required to have at least three years of post-doctoral experience and were evaluated by international experts (Horta and Blasi 2016). As shown by Horta and Blasi (2016), from 2007 to 2009, 1,100 researchers were hired, more than what was originally planned. Further, 41 per cent of them were foreign-born nationals and, among them, 18 per cent were EU nationals (Horta and Blasi 2016).

The Portuguese programmes so far analysed were not specifically designed to promote the return of Portuguese academics.¹⁷ As Delicado (2010a) pointed out, both Ph.D. and postdoctoral FCT fellows are under no obligation to come back to Portugal once they complete their doctorate and post-doctorate abroad. Through the allocation of doctoral and postdoctoral grants and contracts, the government has focussed on a more extensive project, developing quality training and internationalisation as a way to promote circulation of talents, rather than strictly focusing on the return of Portuguese researchers. Yet, even though these policies were not specifically conceived to retain researchers, indirectly, this goal was – partially – achieved. Indeed, the very fact that

¹⁷ Although post-doctoral fellowships and 5-year work contracts provided by the *Ciência* Programme were also partially designed to attract expatriate researchers back to Portugal, they were not specifically intended to this scope. Indeed, these programmes are open to all researchers, even those who have never left Portugal. (Delicado 2010a). However, other measures have been designed to facilitate the return of Portuguese academics. In this respect, see, for example, <https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/regulamento2005.phtml.pt>. ‘CAPÍTULO IV, Apoio à inserção de doutorados portugueses residentes no estrangeiro em instituições de investigação científica e tecnológica nacionais’. (Accessed November 8, 2017).

during the 2000s universities reached higher and more competitive standards, together with a significant increase in funding for research activities led a good number of academics to move for a few years in Portugal, at least for the duration of their scholarship or contract.

It should nonetheless be noted that the programmes analysed in the previous sections were designed to support Portuguese and foreign-born academics on a short and medium-term basis. This means that, similarly to what is happening in Italy, temporary – and hence precarious – employment situations occur frequently in Portuguese academia, often to the disadvantages of younger early-career researchers entering new positions (Cairns et al. 2017). As further outlined in the following chapters, the mobility of Italian researchers to Lisbon over the last fifteen years must be considered in this context.

4.2.3 Policy agenda in the United Kingdom

As detailed in chapter two, the term ‘brain drain’ was coined back in the 1960s by the Royal Society and referred to the emigration of British scientists to the United States and Canada (Royal Society 1963). This clearly shows that the United Kingdom itself experienced the migration of academic staff, a phenomenon that is still ongoing (Milio et al. 2012).

Even though the national investment in research and development has been historically under 2 per cent of GDP,¹⁸ and lower than European competitors such as Germany and France (Figure 4.1), the United Kingdom is one of the most attractive destinations for researchers in Europe, as shown by data on the participation in the European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action (MCSA) funding programmes (Guthrie et al. 2017). In 2016, under Horizon 2020, the United Kingdom has been the leading host country for ERC ‘starting and consolidator grant competition’, with 117 grants awarded (Ibid.: 18; European Research Council 2016a and 2016b). During FP7 (2007-2013), which preceded Horizon 2020, the United Kingdom was the most popular MCSA destination with 5,736 researchers choosing the UK, followed by

¹⁸ See the 1993 White Paper, *Realising our potential. A Strategy for Science, Engineering and Technology* (DTI, 1993). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-our-potential-a-strategy-for-science-engineering-and-technology>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

Germany (3,388 researchers) and France (2,468) (Ibid.: 18). Finally, according to HESA's data,¹⁹ in 2015/2016, the academic staff in UK higher education institutions counted 201,380 members, 139,910 of whom had British nationality. This means that in 2015/2016 approximately 30 per cent of the academic staff in the UK higher education was a foreign national. Summing up, even though the United Kingdom is experiencing the outflow of national academics and other highly skilled workers, a large proportion of foreign talents tend to replace the British nationals leaving the country, containing the shortage of the system and ensuring an intensive level of 'brain circulation' (Milio et al. 2012).

In her analysis of the UK higher education's transformation, Robertson (2010b) identifies two main phases of public policies. In the following section, the second period is analysed in detail, covering main national science and innovation reforms fostering the attraction of academics and 'brain circulation'.

- (i) 1980-1997: under the conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, the New Public Management is introduced to promote the reorganisation of universities, together with a series of policies ensuring greater access to HE institutions.
- (ii) 1997-2010: under New Labour, education, competitiveness and growth are placed at the government's heart, therefore, policies and strategies adopted move in this direction.

To deal with the productivity gap between the United Kingdom and its global competitors – mainly the United States, Germany and France – reform was put into the UK policy agenda through the 1990s (Denyer and Neely 2004). Under Tony Blair's leadership, the Labour government commissioned to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – replaced in 2007 by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) – a series of White Papers to deal with the issue. The 1998 White paper, *'Our Competitive Future: Building the Knowledge-Driven Economy'* (DTI 1998) and the 2000 science and

¹⁹ See HESA website, academic staff in UK HE 2015/2016. <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/staff>. (Accessed November 3, 2017).

innovation White Paper, *'Excellence and opportunity: a science and innovation policy for the 21st century?'* (DTI 2000) are possibly the most relevant for this study.

In the 1998 White Paper, great attention was placed on competition, defined *'the sharpest spur to improve productivity and the best guarantee of reward for talent and innovation'* (DTI, 1998: 8). Furthermore, universities were placed at the heart of innovation policy, as agents of economic growth (Robertson 2010b).

In the 1998 White Paper, concern was expressed upon specific performance gaps between the United Kingdom and its competitors. These gaps included the necessity:

- (i) to modernise the UK science base;
- (ii) increase the investments in R&D;
- (iii) invest in innovative technologies;
- (iv) develop systematic collaborations between the universities and industry;
- (v) turn ideas into marketable products (Robertson 2010b).

To deal with the problem, the government, in partnership with the research charity Wellcome Trust, committed itself to investing £ 1.4 billion between 1999 and 2001 to modernise the infrastructures and equipment of the UK science and engineering base and increase the national expenditure on R&D year-on year over the following three years (DTI 1998; OECD 2000).

In 2000, the second White Paper was commissioned by the Labour's government. In it, three main objectives were identified:

- (i) to maintain and enhance the excellence of the science base;
- (ii) to extend opportunity for innovation;
- (iii) to restore public confidence in science (DTI 2000).

In pursuit of these objectives, and to continue the efforts started in 1998, Blair's government took several policy measures and initiatives, among which the most relevant have been:

- a new £ 1 billion investment, in partnership with the Wellcome Trust, for 2002/2003 and 2003/2004, to renew the infrastructures of the UK science base;
- an additional £ 250 million to boost research in key new areas: genomics, e-science and basic technology, such as nanotechnology, quantum computing and bioengineering;
- an increase in the Ph.D. stipends, over three years, from £ 6,620 (outside London) to £ 9,000 a year. The minimum stipend for Ph.D. students, further increased in the following years. In 2016/17 reached approximately £ 14,000 outside London, and £ 16,000 in London;
- the establishment of a 'Higher Education Innovation Fund' of £ 140 million over three years to encourage universities to cooperate with business in joint research projects;
- the launch of a fund, initially worth £ 4 million – and renewed for 5 years for a total of £ 20 million (Milio et al. 2012) – in partnership with the Royal Society and the Wolfson Foundation, a charity supporting excellence in research, aiming at encouraging the return of British scientists and attracting promising foreign-born researchers;
- changes to the immigration rules to encourage more overseas scientists and engineers to move to the United Kingdom. More specifically, students who qualified for a work permit could get one without leaving the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the requirement for separate permits for supplementary work were removed, so that foreign academics could work more easily in the private sector, as consultants or entrepreneurs;
- as part of the joint effort to create a European Area of Research, the United Kingdom started to tackle barriers to free movement within the EU for scientists who come from outside it (let me say, times have changed.) (DTI 2000).

Taken together, all these measures reflected the perspective of the human capital theory's assumption that greater investments in higher education are translated, at the macro-level, into best productivity for the country and, at the micro-level, into higher wages and higher level of social mobility (Robertson 2010b). This point of view was nonetheless predominant during the whole New Labour's period (mid 1990s-2010),

as exemplified by Peter Mandelson's words in the introduction to the government's 2009 framework for higher education (Mandelson 2009: 24): '*a university education can be an entry ticket to the best paid employment and a preparation for a globalised world of work*'. Alongside this, in 2004, chancellor Gordon Brown boosted further UK research spending, unveiling a 10-year framework for science and innovation (DfES 2004). However, a few years later, the crisis hit and the expenditure on R&D substantially returned to its previous levels.

Lastly, other two major policy initiatives encouraging innovation were adopted: the 2003 '*Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration*' (Lambert 2003) and the 2007 '*Lord Sainsbury's Review of Government Science and Innovation Policies: The Race to the Top*' (Sainsbury 2007), which can be viewed as a coordinate response to the forth above-mentioned gap pointed by the 1998 White Paper. The Lambert review, indeed, identified problems faced by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in establishing links with universities. The key idea was that business should have developed mutually advantageous collaboration with the universities (Robertson 2010b). In this sense, the government would start to invest more to support these collaborations; business would learn how to practically use the innovative ideas developed by the universities and, in turn, universities would learn more about commercialisation. In practical terms, this idea was translated into policy measures such as the Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTPs) (Ibid.: 33), enabling business to get access to high-skilled people working in the UK universities, and therefore improving their competitiveness and performance through the innovative solutions provided by researchers.

In the 2007 Lord Sainsbury's Review, commissioned by Gordon Brown, this idea was further developed and strengthened, in the sense that departments were asked to focus on active engagement with innovative businesses and specify – as well as update on a regular basis – the technological areas in which they would have liked to see research projects (Sainsbury 2007). Furthermore, the report indicated the guidelines and functions of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) which was finally created in June 2007.

As pointed out by Robertson (2010b: 33-34), the emphasis put in the document on the desire to build a science-based economy contributed however to driving a wedge between universities and faculty with different missions:

[...] the Sainsbury offers a particularly narrow view of what counts as innovation – as science and technology driven – such as those leading to high technology start-ups. Social innovation – an important outcome of research from universities social science and humanities faculties – are paradoxically given little attention; yet clearly services are a key sector in knowledge-based services economies, and are indeed a major export area, particularly if we take higher education exports and their contributions to GDP into account.

As Robertson adds (Ibid.: 33), the tone of urgency relating to the need to set up a knowledge-based economy – which characterize the entire Lord Sainsbury's Review – was presumably due to the emergence of low-wage economies in China and India, increasing their ability to compete with the United Kingdom.

To sum up, beyond the massive investment plans throughout the period analysed, the UK's strength seems to lie both in the wise mix of some of the above-mentioned Rs' policies – return, restriction, recruitment, reparation, resourcing and retention policies (the 'six Rs' model of Lindsay Lowell 2002) – and on the introduction of programmes to ease the immigration of foreign national academics. Taken together, these policy measures contributed to fostering the attractiveness of the UK scientific system, 'brain circulation' as well as skills and knowledge transfer.

4.3 The mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London: a cross-national comparison

As argued throughout this thesis, the analysis of academic mobility patterns in different countries is likely to be hampered by data incompatibility or conflation of the terms used (Coey 2013), such as '*academic staff*', '*researcher*', '*Ph.D. student/holder*'. Despite inevitable difficulties, the secondary-data analysis and comparison has proved to be a meaningful tool to explore the two mobility patterns of interest.

Using the two typologies illustrated in chapter three as a reference (Figure 3.1 and 3.2), for Lisbon's data analysis, Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's higher education institutions are considered in the following sections of this chapter. For London's data analysis, all Italian academic staff members – Italians employed in the UK HEIs for the purposes of teaching and/or research – holding at least a postgraduate

degree are considered. As explained already in chapter three, the data supplied by HESA do not include Ph.D. students. This is because HESA includes Ph.D. candidates among students and, thus, in a different dataset.²⁰ As already mentioned, getting access to both the 'Italian academic staff in the UK HEIs' and the 'Italian Ph.D. students in the UK HEIs' datasets would have entailed excessive costs, which is why, ultimately, this gap could not be filled. Therefore, Italian Ph.D. students in the UK higher education sector should be considered excluded from the calculation provided in the next sections of this chapter.

Keeping in mind the above caveat, data supplied by DGEEC and HESA covered all higher education institutions with Italian academics carrying out research activity or teaching. Therefore, both the two agencies covered a wide range of institutions, very different in terms of dimension, prestige and organisation (public/private). In the analysis that follows, all institutions reported in the two datasets supplied by DGEEC and HESA are considered together. The main reason for this choice is that it will enable a comprehensive and more integrated framework of the two mobility patterns, which is, as will be recalled, the major objective of the first part of the fieldwork plan.

4.3.1 An overview of trends since the early 2000s

The first feature to comment on is that, between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015 both Lisbon and London higher education sectors experienced a significant growth in the number of Italian academics (Figure 4.4). More specifically, according to DGEEC, in 2000/2001 there were no Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's universities. In 2004/2005 they became five, after which the number has gradually increased. In fact, in 2009/2010 the number of Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's universities has grown to 40, and the same number has further increase in 2011/2012 (latest available year for Ph.D. holders), reaching 50 members. On the other hand, Italian Ph.D. students in Lisbon were 5 in 2000/2001, 65 in 2009/2010 and, finally 120 in 2013/2014 (latest available data).

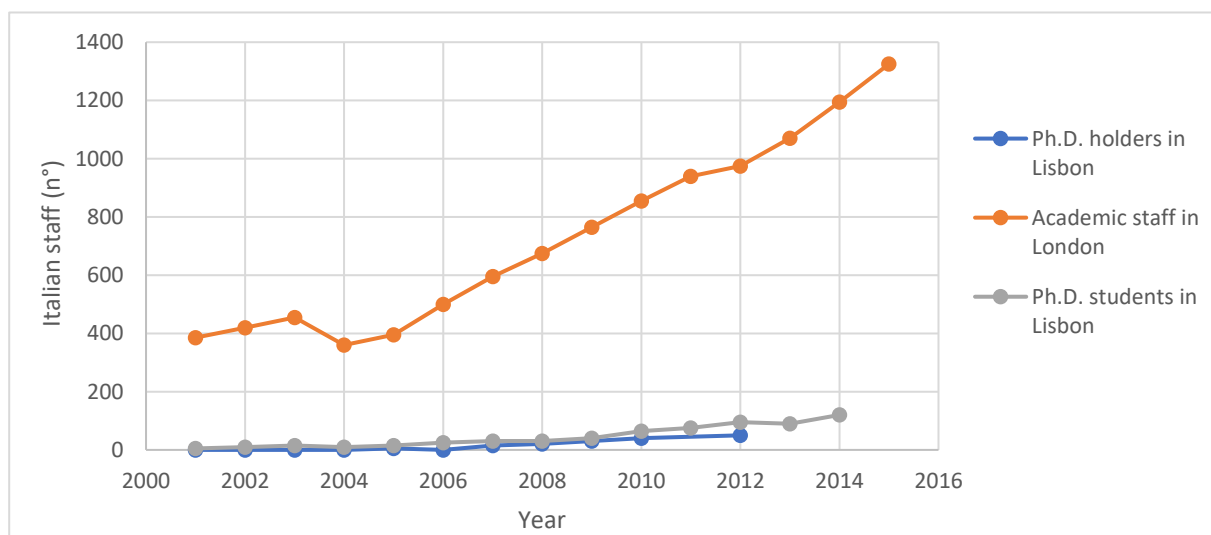
According to HESA, Italian academics in London were 385 in 2000/2001 and 1325 in 2014/2015 (latest available year). This means that the Italian staff in the UK higher

²⁰ More specifically, HESA includes Ph.D. students in the '*students, qualifiers and graduates*' dataset, with the exception of Higher Doctorates and Doctorates by Publications. Ph.D. students are only included within the 'academic staff' dataset if they hold a contract for teaching and/or research with a UK University, but it would not be possible to explicitly identify whether they are studying for a Ph.D.

education sector has more than tripled over the timescale. However, the comparison in absolute terms does not give a fair proportion of the increase in the number of Italian staff in Lisbon's universities. Indeed, as the graph clearly shows (Figure 4.4), the number of Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's higher education institutions and the number of Italian academic staff in the UK higher education sectors was, and still is, significantly different.

As described in the first section of this chapter, this is clearly because we are comparing two very different scientific systems. In fact, '*science in Portugal is marked by a semi-peripheral condition*' as Delicado puts it (2013: 125), whilst the UK system has acquired an enviable reputation and scientific capital²¹, being among the word-leading countries in terms of performance. In the late 1990s/early 2000s, Portugal was developing for the first-time systematic policies to grow its capacity to train and attract national and international academic staff. The United Kingdom, instead, was only strengthening its consolidated capacity to attract non-UK academics, since in the early 2000 it was already among the most attractive destination for researchers.

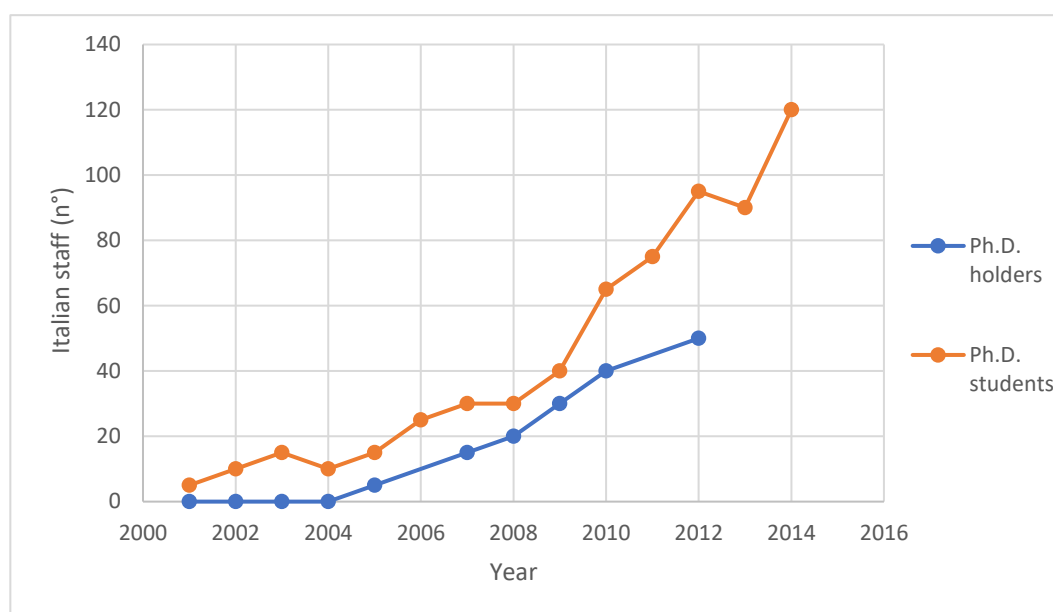
Figure 4.4 - Italian academic staff in Lisbon and London HEIs per year (n°)



Sources: DGEEC (Lisbon) and HESA (London)

²¹ As Bourdieu (2004: 34) suggested, 'scientific capital is a particular kind of symbolic capital, a capital based on knowledge and recognition. It is a power which functions as a form of credit, presupposing the trust or belief of those who undergo it because they are disposed (by their training and by the very fact of their belonging to the field) to give credit, belief.'

Figure 4.5 - Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders in Lisbon HEIs per year (n°)



Sources: DGEEC (Lisbon)

To get a more consistent picture of the overall increase in the number of Italian academics in Lisbon's higher education institutions throughout the timescale, a brief snapshot is provided (Figure 4.5). In the second graph, only Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's universities are considered. As Figure 4.5 shows, the number of Italian Ph.D. students in Lisbon rose from 5 in 2000/2001 to 120 in 2013/2014 or twenty-four times over the timescale. On the other hand, the number of Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's higher education institutions rose from 5 in 2004/2005 to 50 in 2011/2012 or ten times in seven years.

The steady rise in the number of Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders in Lisbon from 2000 onward is remarkable and seems to confirm that Portuguese public policy measures described previously in this chapter have gradually begun to take effect, creating a favourable environment for research activities. More broadly, this strengthens what previous studies have already demonstrated (Peixoto 2004), namely the fact that, since the early 2000s, Portugal has been developing a growing capacity to attract tertiary educated people from abroad – particularly Brazilians and Europeans. At the same time, the above-mentioned systematic underfunding of Italian institutions has created a widespread lack of confidence inside the academic community, acting as a strong push factor (see *Associazione dottorandi e dottori di ricerca italiani*, 2013).

4.3.2 *Institutional destinations, scientific disciplines and employment functions*

To effectively characterize Italian staff in Lisbon and London's higher education institutions, we will now narrow down the focus of this analysis and consider main institutions, scientific disciplines and employment functions carried out in the two cities, according to the latest available data. Broadly speaking, the picture that emerges from the analysis of the universities with the greatest number of Italian staff is of a certain distribution across the main institutions, both in Lisbon and London (Table 4.1 and 4.2).

Table 4.1 - HEIs in Lisbon ranked by number of Italian academic staff (latest available years)

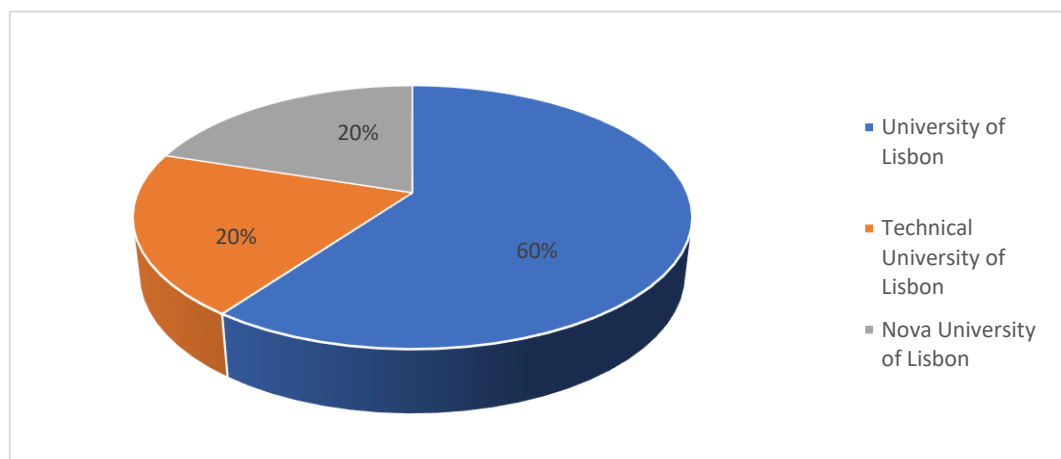
Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon, by HEIs (2011/2012)		
	N	%
University of Lisbon	30	60.0
Technical University of Lisbon	10	20.0
Nova University of Lisbon	10	20.0
Total	50	100
<i>Source: DGEEC</i>		
Italian Ph.D. students in Lisbon, by HEIs (2013/2014)		
	N	%
University of Lisbon	75	62.5
Nova University of Lisbon	35	29.2
Other HEIs	10	8.3
Total	120	100
<i>Source: DGEEC</i>		

Table 4.2 - HEIs in London ranked by number of Italian academic staff (latest available year)

Italian academic staff in London, by HEIs (2014/2015)		
	N	%
Imperial College London	220	16.6
King's College London	220	16.6
University College London	205	15.5
Queen Mary University of London	120	9.1
London School of Economics and Political Science	110	8.3
City, University of London	70	5.3
Brunel University London	45	3.4
Birkbeck, University of London	35	2.6
The Institute of Cancer Research	30	2.3
The University of Westminster	30	2.3
The School of Oriental and African Studies	25	1.9
Other HEIs	215	16.2
Total	1325	100
<i>Source: HESA</i>		

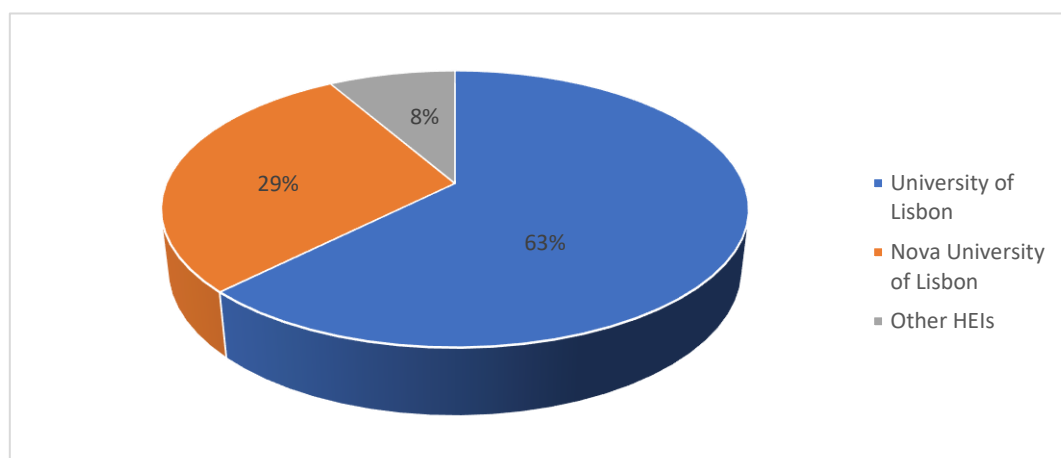
This distribution assumes even starker significance when the share of Italian staff in Lisbon's and London's main universities is explored in more detail. In Lisbon, in 2011/2012 – which, as will be recalled from chapter three, was the latest available year for Ph.D. holders – Italian Ph.D. holders were distributed across three institutions: the University of Lisbon, the former Technical University of Lisbon and the Nova University of Lisbon. Further, as of July 2013, the Technical University of Lisbon merged with the University of Lisbon, which means that today it is part of the University of Lisbon (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 - Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon in 2011/2012, by HEI (%) (latest available year)



Source: DGEEC

Figure 4.7 - Italian Ph.D. students in Lisbon in 2013/2014, by HEI (%) (latest available year)



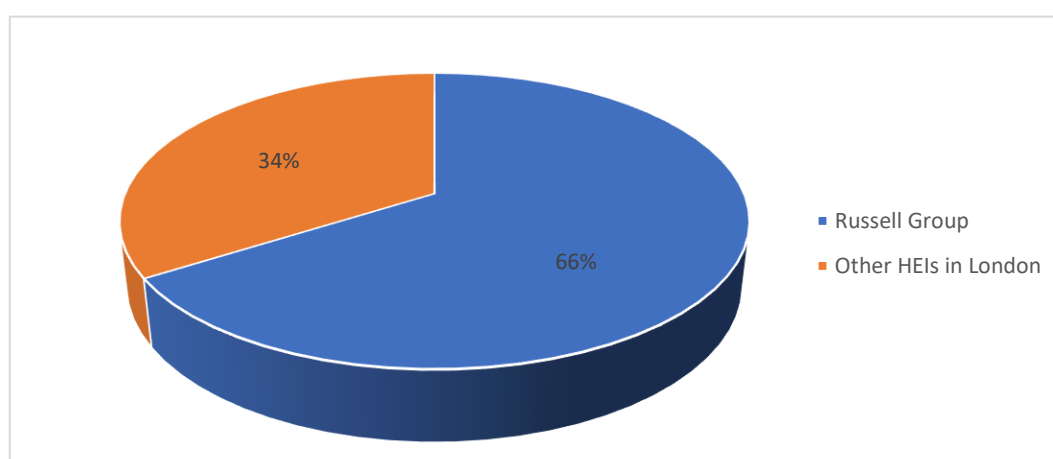
Source: DGEEC

Similarly, in 2013/2014 (latest available year for Ph.D. students), over 90 per cent of Italian Ph.D. students were distributed across the University of Lisbon, which include the *Instituto Superior Técnico*, and the Nova University of Lisbon (Figure 4.7).

In London, in 2014/2015, more than 65 per cent of Italian academic staff was a member of one of the Russell Group's institutions, an elite group of twenty-four public research-intensive universities in the United Kingdom (Figure 4.8). On the one hand, this finding points to the strong relevance of the reputational context of the universities for many researchers in London, which will be further examined in the next chapter. On the other hand, it points to the research quality that these elite universities can offer, also thanks to the considerable proportion of funds that they receive. As stated by Smetherham et al. (2010:418):

In 2006–2007, all Russell Group Universities accounted for 66% (over £2.2 billion) of UK Universities' research grant and contract income, 68% of total Research Council income, 56% of all doctorates awarded in the UK, and over 30% of all students studying in the UK from outside the EU. Small in number, the RG institutions lead in research income and have large staff complements.

Figure 4.8 - Italian academic staff in London in 2014/2015, by HEI (%) (latest available year)

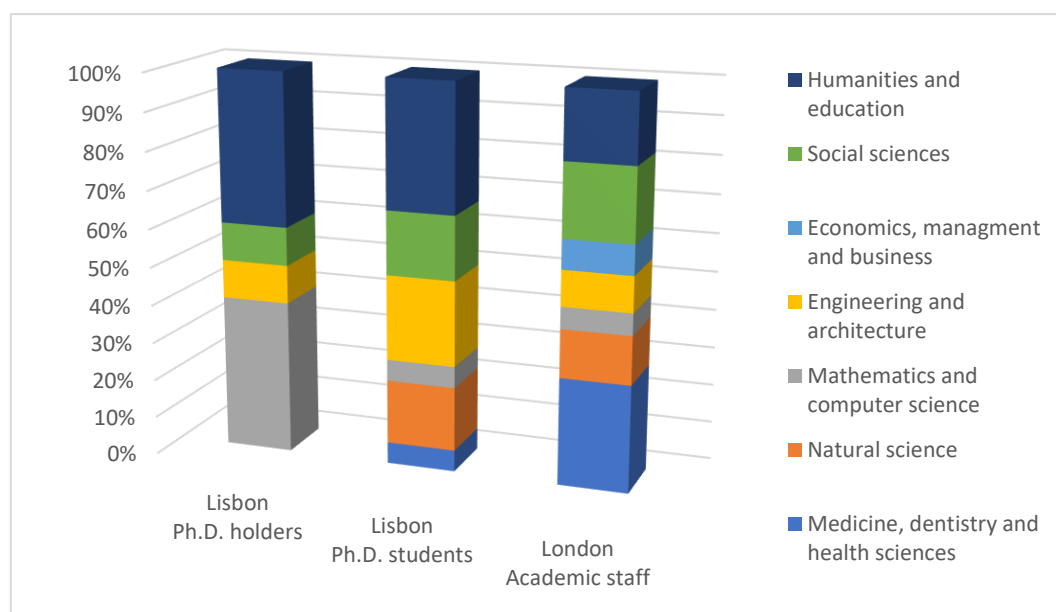


Source: HESA

The distribution by scientific discipline adds an interesting item of information. Figure 4.9 reveals that, in 2011/2012 (which was chosen as a reference year since it is

the latest available year for Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's universities), 40 per cent of Italian Ph.D. holders and 33 per cent Ph.D. students found that Lisbon's universities were a valid choice in the fields of humanities and education. Adding this percentage to that of Italian Ph.D. holders and Ph.D. students carrying out research activities in social sciences (respectively 10 per cent and 17 per cent) increases to 50 per cent of the total.

Figure 4.9 - Italian academic staff in Lisbon and London HEIs, by scientific discipline (2011/2012)



Sources: DGEEC (Lisbon) and HESA (London)

What is even more interesting though – since it is perhaps less widely known – is that the remaining 50 per cent of Italian staff in Lisbon was concentrated in the fields of mathematics and computer science, engineering and architecture and natural science (biological science and physical science). More specifically, 40 per cent of Ph.D. holders were located in the fields of mathematics and computer science, followed by engineering and architecture (10 per cent). On the other hand, 22 per cent of Ph.D. students were in the fields of engineering and architecture, followed by natural science (17 per cent), mathematics and computer science (6 per cent) and medicine, dentistry and health sciences (5 per cent). This distribution across different fields shows that Lisbon's universities are gradually becoming well-known internationally in a wide range of disciplines. More broadly, it reinforces the idea that the introduction of an international evaluation practice has facilitated the international visibility of Portuguese universities.

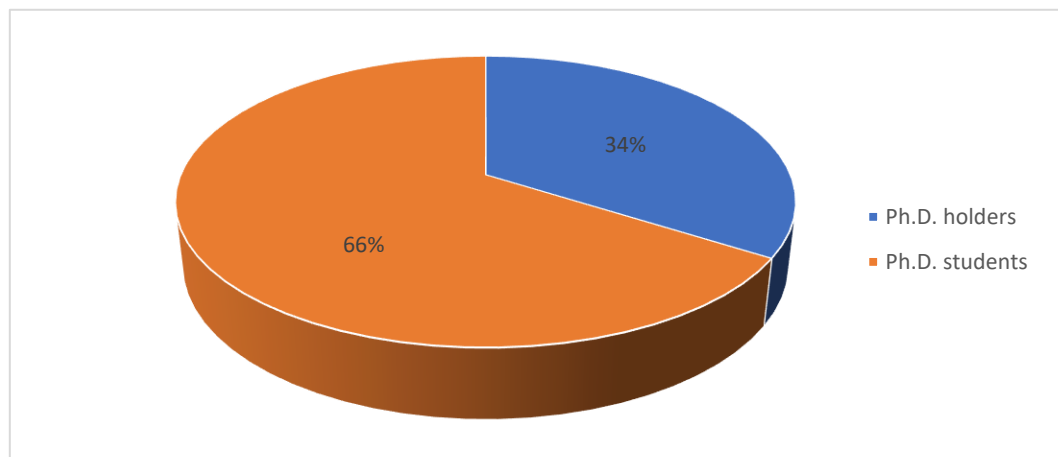
In London, the disciplinary location of Italian academics in the same year reveals a concentration in the fields of medicine, dentistry and health sciences (28 per cent), followed by natural science (12 per cent), engineering and architecture (9 per cent), economics, management and business (8 per cent) and, finally, mathematics and computer science (6 per cent). This confirms that the above-mentioned policy interventions contributed to the opening-up of a considerable number of positions in specific fields, namely those interpreted as the driving forces for economic growth and innovation. Yet, slightly less than 40 per cent of the remaining Italian staff in London's universities was working in the fields of humanities and education (18 per cent) and social sciences (19 per cent). This confirms that, although the concentration of research funding in some disciplines created a higher demand in these fields, London's universities are particularly attractive and competitive across a vast range of fields.

Finally, figures 4.10 and 4.11 show how Italian academics are distributed in Lisbon's and London's universities according to their employment function. DGEEC and HESA collected this information in diverse ways: in Lisbon, Italian academics are grouped as either 'Ph.D. holders' or 'Ph.D. students' whilst, in London, academic staff is divided based on the employment function, which can be 'teaching only', 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. It is worth reminding once again that Italian Ph.D. students in the UK higher education institutions are not included in the calculation, since HESA collects information about Ph.D. students in a different dataset.

Bearing this in mind, in 2011/2012, the overwhelming majority of Italian academics in Lisbon higher education institutions was a doctoral student (Figure 4.10), presumably because of the good number of scholarships available in that year. On the other hand, the potential reason for the lower share of Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon's universities in the same year could be related to the fact that, often, the positions available in the Portuguese academia have a temporary nature (short or medium-term positions). This relates to the conclusions drawn by a recent study (Santos et al. 2016). Interestingly, the study suggests that, rather than supporting the widespread argument according to which 'Ph.D. students in Portugal are too many', policy makers should focus on the shortage of Ph.D. holders, both in the academic and non-academic sectors of activity (Ibid.: 1). In other words, in Portugal, the challenge for the future seems to be that of actively supporting the inclusion of those Ph.D. students trained over the

timescale considered in this study in the public and private sectors, thus fostering the competitiveness of the country. This is an issue which most likely need a deeper analysis. For this reason, it will be further explored in the next chapter, considering the impressions and point of view of some of the Italian academics in Lisbon.

Figure 4.10 - Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D holders in Lisbon HEIs, by employment function (2011/2012)



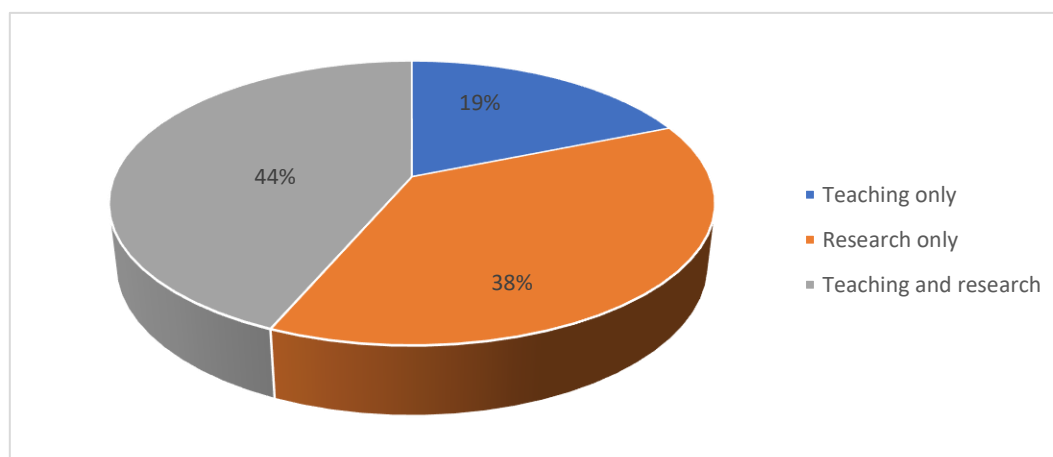
Source: DGECC

Looking at the employment function of Italian academic staff in London in 2014/2015 reveals that a considerable proportion of them – slightly less than half the total – was employed with a contract that was both teaching and researching. However, a still significant share of staff was in a research-only active status (Figure 4.11), which is typically – but not only – a position on a fixed-term basis, lasting as long as a research grant. As Ackers and Gill (2005) pointed out, within the UK academia, international recruitment is often a solution to domestic skills shortages. This finding is consistent with more recent research (Khattab and Fenton 2016), suggesting that, in the UK, research-only posts are generally less appreciated and more difficult to fill by UK academics. Hence, this may help us understand why, within the UK academia, many Italian academics are in a research-only posts.

Yet, the ‘patchwork of incomes’ that academics with a fixed-term contract inevitably experience has become an increasingly common feature in academia, together with the insecurity carried with them. Alongside this, it is still unclear what the situation of UK research funding will be in the next years, due to the potential impact of

Brexit. In 2014/2015, indeed, around 11 per cent of research income came from European research (Universities UK 2016).

Figure 4.11 - Italian academic staff in London HEIs, by employment function (full-person equivalent) (2014/2015)



Source: HESA

4.4 Conclusion

The analysis of the main higher education policies in Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom since the late 1990s seems to indicate that the three countries have been investing and developing different strategies to promote and enhance the research and innovation capacities and therefore had very different outcomes, over the timescale considered. This seems to reflect the still high relevance of the national scale and competition among member states, which is possibly even more evident than the sharing of common European values. This finding is thus consistent with Musselin's studies on the national orientation of academic labour markets in Europe (2004 and 2005), exposed in chapter two.

It has been highlighted that, in Italy, policy makers tended to focus on the return of Italian academics. And yet several academic studies suggest that there are other priority areas needing to be addressed at the institutional level, namely the systematic underfunding and the structural difficulty of incorporating the younger generation of researchers in the scientific system (Morano-Foadi 2006; Beltrame 2007; Donina et al. 2015). Alongside this, the singular nature of the Italian situation – compared to other European countries – is the inability to attract researchers from abroad, rather than retain researchers within national borders.

Next, emphasis was put on those factors that enabled the progressive and crucial development of the Portuguese scientific system. A key element was the farsighted decision to ensure a progressive increase in the expenditure on research and development (GERD) since 2000 and, particularly, from 2006 to 2010. However, it was underlined that new dramatic funding cuts started in 2010 – that is shortly after the economic crisis and as part of the austerity measures introduced in the country – are currently reducing the virtuous dynamic triggered by these policies, also proving that the Portuguese scientific system has not yet achieved maturity (Heitor and Horta 2012). Equally important was the investment in a more outward-looking international perspective, which led *inter alia* to the creation of the FCT, the main public funding agency in Portugal.

Lastly, it was specified that, in the late 1990s, the United Kingdom was already implementing a policy agenda devoted to the construction of globally competitive knowledge-based economy, resting on innovation and high-skilled workforce. Further, in the early 2000s, the UK scientific system was among the most competitive ones, not only in Europe but at worldwide level. Therefore, unlike Italy and Portugal, the United Kingdom was already experiencing ‘brain circulation’ and could attract academics from all over the world. This is a matter of no little significance, which must be considered when data is compared. Overall, it seems that beside the long-lasting scientific capital achieved, the UK’s system strength lies in: the long-term massive investment plan, a wise mix of some Rs’ policies (Lindsay Lowell 2002) as well as on the introduction of programmes to ease the immigration of non-UK academics.

The exploratory analysis of DGEEC and HESA data exposed in the second part of the chapter has revealed several interesting features. Albeit with limitations, data has shown that, both in Lisbon and in London, the number of Italians academics has grown rapidly since the early 2000s. More specifically, in London the number of Italian academic staff has grown around three times between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015 (latest available data). In Lisbon – where the scientific system was being consolidated – the number of Italian Ph.D. students has grown around twenty-four times from 2000/2001 and 2013/2014 (latest available data) and that of Ph.D. holders has grown around ten times in seven years (from 2004/2005 to 2011/2012, where 2011/2012 was the latest available data).

Another point can be made about the distribution of Italian staff across the main institutions. In Lisbon, these are the University of Lisbon – founded in 2013 from the merger of the former University of Lisbon (*Universidade de Lisboa*) and the Technical University of Lisbon (*Universidade Técnica de Lisboa*) – and the Nova University of Lisbon. On the other hand, the institutions that attract the overwhelming majority of Italian staff – and research funds – in London are those included in the Russell Group.

In Lisbon, the distribution by scientific discipline in 2011/2012 (which was chosen as a reference year since it was the latest available year for Ph.D. holders in Lisbon) has shown a certain concentration of Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders in the fields of humanities, education and social sciences. In the same year, in London, Italian academics were spread across the following disciplines: medicine, dentistry and health sciences, followed by natural science, engineering and architecture, economics, management and business and, finally, mathematics and computer science. However, both in Lisbon and London, around 50 per cent of Italian staff was located in other scientific disciplines. On the one hand, this proves that Lisbon's universities are becoming increasingly well known internationally in a wide range of disciplines. On the other hand, it confirms that, although the concentration of research funding in some disciplines – namely those interpreted as the driving forces for economic growth and innovation – created a higher demand in these fields, London's universities are particularly attractive and competitive across a vast range of fields.

Finally, the employment function of Italian academic staff in the two cities was considered. Data revealed that, in 2011/2012, two thirds of Italian academics in Lisbon were Ph.D. students, presumably because of the good number of scholarships available up until that time. On the other hand, a potential reason for the lower number of Italian Ph.D. holders in Lisbon, compared to that of Italian Ph.D. students, could be the fact that, often, the positions available in the Portuguese academia are temporary (short or medium-term positions). On the other hand, in London, in 2014/2015 Italian academic staff, was mostly teaching and researching, even though the proportion of staff doing research only was still significant.

As rich as DGEEC and HESA datasets were, however, they have inevitably left several questions opened. What are the profiles of Italian academics in the two cities? When and why did they move to Lisbon and London? Attempting to answer to these and

other central questions, primary data has been collected and will be analysed in the next chapter.

5. Academic mobility to Lisbon and London from the perspective of the people involved. Narratives and self-perceptions

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, academic mobility from Italy to Lisbon and London was examined through the discussion of the main policy measures adopted in Italy, Portugal and the UK and the analysis of secondary data, which provided a context for the data that will be shortly analysed. The aim of this chapter is therefore to present and discuss the processes that led several Italian academics to move to Lisbon and London. A bottom up approach is adopted which, to a large extent, responds to the need to generate a fuller understanding of the phenomenon, taking into consideration the opinions and insights provided by the actors involved in the two mobility patterns.

The chapter is organised as follows. The first section gives a brief outline of how the primary data was collected, namely recalling that two e-surveys were disseminated in Lisbon and London, a world café was hosted in Lisbon, at IGOT, and six individual interviews were conducted with Italian academics based in London. The second section explores in detail the two e-surveys' contents. More specifically, the profile of respondents in the two cities is analysed, then their mobility and location decisions will be explored, together with their future expectations and plans. In section three, the main topics discussed during the world café and the interviews will be thoroughly discussed.

5.2 Analysing primary data: main findings

To further our understanding of the two academic mobility patterns being examined, the analysis of secondary data presented in the previous chapter has been combined with exploratory investigations based on primary data. As described in

chapter three, primary data has been collected through two internet-based questionnaires (e-surveys), a world café convened in Lisbon and six face-to face and Skype interviews with Italian academics based in London. The main purpose of the e-surveys was to collect in-depth quantitative and qualitative information, seeking to better frame the mobility motivations and practices of several Italian academics living in Lisbon and London. On the other hand, the rationale behind the world café and the interviews was to engage participants into a broader reflection upon academic mobility, capture their key ideas and comments and trying to generate new and useful insights into the matter.

Thus, both the policy analysis and the revision of secondary data outlined in chapter four provided the foundations for the analysis set out below, centred on some Italian academics, their life and career experiences and their expectations. Main findings of the second (e-surveys) and third fieldwork activities (world café and interviews) are unfolded and analysed together in this chapter.

5.3 E-surveys: experiences and motivations

As will be recalled from chapter three, the questions making up the two e-surveys disseminated in Lisbon and London were both close and open-ended and divided into five sections (see Appendices 1 and 2):

- (i) general information;
- (ii) migratory project/international mobility;
- (iii) pre-departure organisation;
- (iv) inclusion, social networks, strong and weak ties;
- (v) future perspectives.

The online surveys were written in Italian and I translated the quotations that follow into English. As mentioned in chapter three, the results were analysed using Excel. It is important to remember that, although significant, the samples obtained through the e-surveys are not representative, which means that any generalisation is carefully avoided.

5.3.1 Respondents' profiles

The two e-surveys drew responses from 136 respondents in total, 68 in Lisbon and 68 in London. It is by pure coincidence that the same number of respondents in the two cities filled them in. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter three, the number of potential respondents contacted in both cities was larger and, ultimately, approximately 52 per cent of contacts based in Lisbon replied, whereas only 38 per cent of those in London gave a response.

The e-survey disseminated in Lisbon drew responses from 68 Italian academics, 40 men and 28 women (Table 5.1). Out of the 68 respondents, slightly more than 50 per cent were working as post-doctoral researchers or research assistants, followed by a little over 30 per cent of doctoral students and 10 per cent of university professors (Table 5.2). As regards the distribution by scientific discipline (Table 5.3), roughly a third of them was working in the field of humanities and education (32 per cent), followed by social sciences (30 per cent), engineering and architecture (18 per cent), natural science (16 per cent), mathematics and computer science (3 per cent) and, finally, economics, management and business (1 per cent).

In spring/summer 2015, when drawing up the questionnaire, the vast majority of respondents were below 40 years old (75 per cent) and, more specifically, between 31 and 40 years old (63 per cent) (Table 5.4). More than 60 per cent of the sample had moved to Lisbon quite recently, from 2007 onwards (Figure 5.1), showing a strong connection between the year of arrival in Lisbon and the impact of Portuguese public policies on the ground.

Table 5.1 - E-surveys. Respondents by sex

	Lisbon (N)	Lisbon (%)	London (N)	London (%)
Women	28	41	33	49
Men	40	59	35	51
Total	68	100	68	100

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's and London's e-surveys

Table 5.2 - E-surveys. Respondents by academic position

	Lisbon (N)	Lisbon (%)	London (N)	London (%)
Professors	7	10	20	30
Post-doc/Research assistants	36	53	24	35
Ph.D. students	22	32	24	35
Not available	3	5	0	0
Total	68	100	68	100

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's and London's e-surveys

Table 5.3 - E-surveys. Respondents by scientific discipline

	Lisbon (N)	Lisbon (%)	London (N)	London (%)
Humanities and education	22	32	16	24
Social sciences	20	30	10	15
Economics, management and business	1	1	7	10
Engineering and architecture	12	18	2	3
Mathematics and computer science	2	3	5	7
Natural science	11	16	8	12
Medicine, dentistry and health sciences	0	0	20	29
Total	68	100	68	100

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's and London's e-surveys

Table 5.4 - E-surveys. Respondents by age group

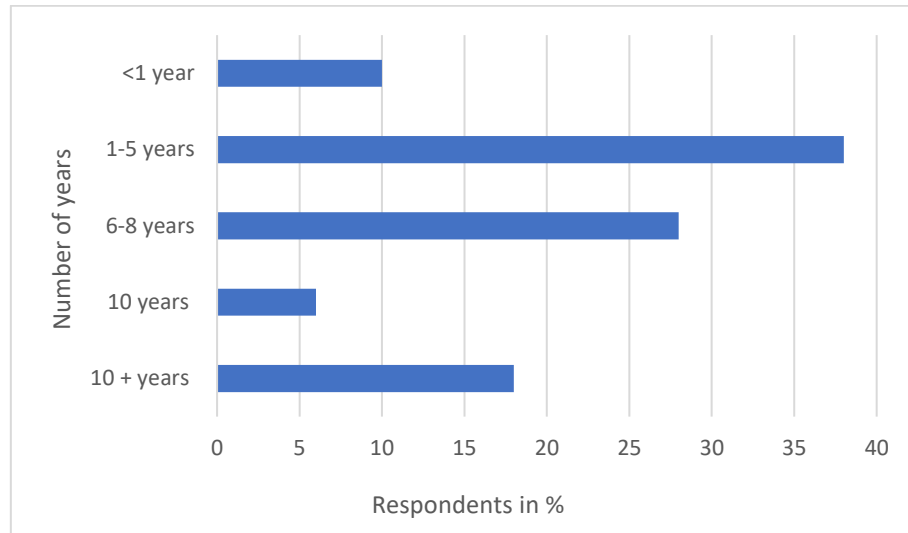
	Lisbon (N)	Lisbon (%)	London (N)	London (%)
26-30	8	12	21	31
31-35	25	37	24	35
36-40	18	26	11	16
41-45	9	13	8	12
46-50	4	6	3	5
50+	4	6	1	1
Total	68	100	68	100

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's and London's e-surveys

Turning attention to London-based respondents' profile, they were almost equally split between men (n=35) and women (n=33) (Table 5.1). In winter/spring 2017, when the e-survey was disseminated, a little over one third of them were employed in London higher education institutions as post-doctoral fellows or research assistants (35 per cent), another third as Ph.D. students (35 per cent) and a little less than one third as professors (30 per cent) (Table 5.2). Most of them were working in the field of medicine,

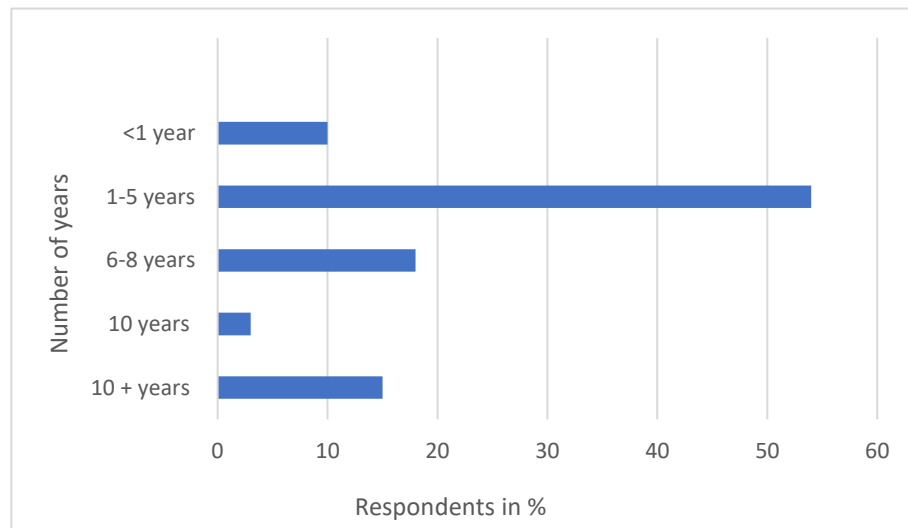
dentistry and health science (29 per cent).²² In addition, slightly less than one quarter of respondents were employed in the field of humanities and education (24 per cent), followed by social sciences (15 per cent), natural science (12 per cent), economics, management and business (10 per cent), mathematics and computer science (7 per cent), engineering and architecture (3 per cent) (Table 5.3).

Figure 5.1 - E-survey (Lisbon). Respondents by time spent in Lisbon



Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's e-survey

Figure 5.2 - E-survey (London). Respondents by time spent in London



Source: Personal elaboration based on London's e-survey

²² This might be due to a common contact, namely my brother, who at the time was employed at UCL in the same field and hooked me up with a few close Italian colleagues of his, whom enthusiastically took part in the online survey.

As in the case of Lisbon, most of them were under 40 years old (82 per cent) and, more specifically between 26 and 35 years old (66 per cent) (Table 5.4). Finally, more than 80 per cent of these academics had moved to London after 2009 and, more specifically, after 2012 (54 per cent) (Figure 5.2).

To sum up, the two e-surveys have provided some quite stunning results. For instance, they have shown that respondents based in Lisbon have been living in Portugal for a longer time compared to their colleagues based in London, and yet the number of university professors was much higher among London's respondents. In other words, there did not seem to be a correlation between the relatively few years spent in London's universities and the desirable academic position held by 30 per cent of them there, namely that of professor. On the other hand, respondents based in Lisbon were found to hold especially short-term or medium-term positions (e.g. Ph.D. scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships). As highlighted by literature (Cairns et al. 2017), this seems to be in line with the fact that the Portuguese academia is characterized by a 'dual knowledge labour market', with a small number of senior principal investigators and a much larger number of junior researchers, mostly holding temporary academic positions. Finally, at the time of data collection, respondents based in Lisbon were working especially in the fields of humanities and education, whilst those in London were mostly employed in the field of medicine, dentistry and health science. As mentioned above and in chapter three though, this last feature might be due to the activation of personal networks, which were strong especially in the case of London.

5.3.2 *Mobility in perspective: leaving Italy*

One of the key findings, concerning the motivations for leaving Italy is that, in both cases, this choice seemed justified by a variety of reasons and not entirely based on economic grounds, which is consistent with previous studies on the subject (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014). Further, it is significant to note that the reasons behind this choice were – to a certain extent – shared by all 136 respondents, as shown by the response rates reported in the two tables that follow (Table 5.5 and 5.6).

Table 5.5 - Lisbon's e-survey. Main reasons for leaving Italy

Main reasons for leaving Italy	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Do not agree	Did not respond	Total (N)
I have always thought about leaving Italy after my studies	31%	23%	46%		68
My family of origin always encouraged me to look for a job outside Italy	12%	16%	72%		68
In Italy, I could not find a job that would take account of my professional qualifications	61%	10%	29%		68
Other members of my family of origin left the country before me and this influenced me	18%	6%	76%		68
Lack of cutting-edge technologies in Italian laboratories	15%	17%	68%		68
Lack of funding and incentives to support research activities in Italy	75%	7%	18%		68
Frequent cases of corruption (or nepotism) in the Italian universities	69%	22%	8%	1%	68
Lack of meritocracy in Italian universities	75%	16%	9%		68
Job insecurity (job uncertainty) in Italy	71%	20%	9%		68
International mobility is a key feature of the internationalisation of learning and teaching. Thus, it is important to gain some international experience	82%	9%	9%		68

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's e-survey

Table 5.6 - London's e-survey. Main reasons for leaving Italy

Main reasons for leaving Italy	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Do not agree	Did not respond	Total (N)
I have always thought about leaving Italy after my studies	38%	19%	43%		68
My family of origin always encouraged me to look for a job outside Italy	25%	12%	63%		68
In Italy, I could not find a job that would take account of my professional qualifications	57%	15%	28%		68
Other members of my family of origin left the country before me and this influenced me	15%	4%	81%		68
Lack of cutting-edge technologies in Italian laboratories	28%	25%	47%		68
Lack of funding and incentives to support research activities in Italy	76%	9%	15%		68
Frequent cases of corruption (or nepotism) in the Italian universities	84%	7%	9%		68
Lack of meritocracy in Italian universities	80%	9%	11%		68
Job insecurity (job uncertainty) in Italy	78%	15%	7%		68
International mobility is a key feature of the internationalisation of learning and teaching. Thus, it is important to gain some international experience	87%	9%	4%		68

Source: Personal elaboration based on London's e-survey

Among the various reasons I proposed in the e-surveys, a large majority of the Lisbon-based respondents chose the lack of funding to support research activities (75 per cent) and the perception of a lack of meritocracy in Italian universities (75 per cent). Equally important reasons in motivating mobility from Italy were job instability (71 per

cent) – mainly due to the perception of the academic field as an increasingly insecure career path – and cases of corruption or nepotism in working environments (69 per cent). As table 5.6 shows, respondents based in London stressed further the unbearable burden of corruption and cases of nepotism (84 per cent) and shared with their colleagues based in Lisbon the perception of a general lack of meritocracy in Italian universities (80 per cent). In addition, academics in London declared that there is a general lack of job security in Italian academia (78 per cent) and suggested once again that the resources allocated to the Italian scientific system are insufficient (76 per cent). Of course, academic mobility was not purely economic driven, at least not in a narrow sense. In this respect, many of the respondents based in Lisbon (82 per cent) and London (87 per cent) agreed that moving to a new country and gain some international experience is an enriching process and a normal part of the scientific practice.

Overall, the data analysed so far are an essential step towards a more exhaustive interpretation of respondents' mobility from Italy. The perception of job instability is, indeed, the most probable consequence of the introduction of temporary, non-tenured positions for researchers (Law 240/2010 or 'Gelmini reform'). As mentioned in the previous chapter, three-year positions are currently replacing the former tenured positions, overexposing academics to job insecurity. Job insecurity, however, cannot be restricted solely to the Italian academia. In fact, as will be outlined below, it was frequently mentioned as one of the most important reasons behind a possible future mobility from Lisbon.

Further, the combined action of new recruitment procedures and lack of proper funding for research is leading to the reduction of positions available (Rossi 2014), making Italian academia increasingly unattractive to the younger generation. Finally, the lack of meritocracy and the perceived corruption seem to exacerbate all this. It was indeed a common opinion among all 136 respondents that the limited resources only benefit the few and, regrettably, the ones who do not deserve them. All together, these reasons – often interconnected – reflect the complexity of the situation and seem to confirm that it is rather difficult and perhaps inappropriate to identify and isolate a single rationale who had led these academics to relocate abroad.

Since it was my impression that this issue required further and deeper analysis, respondents were further asked to describe their personal reasons for relocating to

Lisbon's and London's institutions in an open question. Some of the issues mentioned above were then recalled and other interesting aspects emerged, as summarised by the following answers:

I left Italy and chose Lisbon because I had a degree in Portuguese literature, of course, but also because of a certain thirst for adventure and the desire to make new experiences outside Italy. (Male, professor, University of Lisbon.)

In addition, personal interest in the country and the desire to explore new contexts were, in a few cases, behind the choice of London:

Well, [...] I've always wanted to live in a cosmopolitan city like London. (Male, post-doc researcher, King's College London.)

Honestly, I've moved to London to fulfil a personal wish [...] So it was the desire to know new cultures and to find a psychological dimension in which I could feel more comfortable. In Italy I didn't feel so much at home. I've always wanted to venture into something new and I'll probably move again soon to discover other countries, even though a bit of me is feeling British now. (Female, Ph.D. student, Birkbeck, University of London.)

Interestingly, two researchers based in Lisbon recalled that moving from one place to another is part of a researcher's identity. However, the choice of some terms they used ('patriot', 'country of origin') revealed their resentment, almost exasperation, towards, presumably, the nationalistic rhetoric of 'brain drain' ongoing in Italy.

I felt I would lose more interesting opportunities abroad. Then, I felt that, to build an academic career [in Italy], I'd have had to collude with dynamics that do not fit my personality and education. I never considered that my country or my city are the places where I have to stay. I've never been a patriot, and I didn't come to Portugal to look for a toned-down version of Italy. I didn't

mind moving and the Erasmus confirmed to me this propensity. (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

To be honest, I've never cared much about staying in Italy. I think that the very concept of country of origin is extremely provincial now. I can put the question in a different way and saying: why not relocating? (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

Frustration and other sources of dissatisfaction towards the Italian academia and the professional environment emerged clearly in the answers provided by respondents based in London:

My main motivation [to leave Italy]? It was that I wanted to grow scientifically and become a scientist able to think and work independently, which is something that in Italy (I was clearly told) I would never get (at least not in a short-term). I would always be subordinated to someone else. (Female, professor, Queen Mary University of London.)

When I was in Italy, I've been told by a few professors of mine that, unfortunately (even for them!) a Ph.D. is not recognised nor valued in Italy. (Male, Ph.D. student, Imperial College London.)

Another point which emerged in the open question was related to the self-perception of respondents' mobility path. Interestingly, most of them did not feel comfortable in describing their relocation as a *migration*, a term that is often related to the idea of a forced or permanent movement (Al Ariss 2010; Tharenou 2010). The use of mobility was largely preferred, as summarised by these two respondents.

I find it difficult to talk about an emigration in my case but, on the other hand, I've been thinking about how to call myself a lot, lately. Migrant? Expat? A colleague of mine calls me 'nomad'. I think that, basically, the curiosity and the opportunity to travel freely around Europe has encouraged me to

consider the possibility to move outside the national territory. Today I'm in Lisbon and in the future, who knows, it can take me elsewhere. (Female, post-doc researcher, ISCTE- University Institute of Lisbon.)

I don't live my condition as an emigration. I like to work in Italy and in other countries. I lived in France and in the United States. [...] Work abroad, emigration and insecurity are three different phenomena, which, for me, have different values and are independent of each other. As for me, I worked in several countries (positive); I don't feel like a migrant (neutral); unfortunately, I have a precarious life (negative). (Female, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

Many of the respondents, both in Lisbon (54 per cent) and London (55 per cent), stated that they do not think Italy will offer the condition to return, in a near future. Due to the set of reasons mentioned above, and in line with an extensive literature (e.g. Morano-Foadi 2006; Beltrame 2007; Cenci 2015; Sbalchiero and Tuzzi 2017) Italy is considered a country where it is difficult to pursue a stable academic career. This might suggest that, ultimately, mobility was not entirely voluntary but not a forced path either, at least not in the strict sense, which is a matter that will be further explored through the world café and the interviews.

5.3.3 *Motivating mobility to Lisbon and London*

It is now time to focus attention on the reasons that led respondents to Lisbon and London. On this point, it should be noted that the process leading respondents towards the two cities was not always straightforward, since subjective assessments influenced both the *decision to move* and that of *where to move*. As previous work on this subject has evidenced (Coey 2013), generalizing about the links between *mobility decision* and *mobility direction* can be challenging and uncertain, since there are many ways in which these two come together and their connection is directly influenced by individual's biographies. For instance, a few respondents in both cities experienced multiple mobilities. Although cases of multiple moves were recurrent in the e-surveys and therefore an important feature to mention, any generalisation about this practice

is avoided since, in all cases, this choice appeared to be closely connected with personal stories.

That said, looking at the reasons that made the two capital cities popular destinations among the respondents (Table 5.7 and 5.8), the following was observed. Predictably, respondents agreed that the very fact they were awarded a fellowship played a significant role in the location decisions. This was particularly clear in the case of Lisbon (85 per cent), less in the case of London (65 per cent). This is an interesting feature, showing how the allocation of funds to support research activities (such as scholarships) shaped the location decision among Lisbon-based respondents.

Table 5.7 - Lisbon's e-survey. Main reasons for choosing Portugal

Main reasons for choosing Portugal	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Do not agree	Total (N)
Better quality of life in Portugal	51%	21%	28%	68
Greater degree of autonomy and personal satisfaction in Portugal	52%	26%	22%	68
Greater appreciation of my qualifications and skills in the Portuguese academic labour market	52%	22%	26%	68
Portugal attracts me more as a country of the future	12%	51%	37%	68
Better chance to improve career prospects in Portugal	29%	33%	38%	68
Personal and family reasons (e.g. reunification)	21%	7%	72%	68
I have been awarded a scholarship in Portugal (Ph.D., post-doc or other)	85%	3%	12%	68
I have been awarded a scholarship in Portugal, otherwise I would have chosen another country	29%	31%	40%	68
My research activity is linked to Portugal	46%	9%	45%	68

Source: Personal elaboration based on Lisbon's e-survey

Table 5.8 - London's e-survey. Main reasons for choosing the UK

Main reasons for choosing the UK	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Do not agree	Total (N)
Better quality of life in the UK	20%	30%	50%	68
Greater degree of autonomy and personal satisfaction in the UK	84%	10%	6%	68
Greater appreciation of my qualifications and skills in the UK academic labour market	87%	7%	6%	68
The UK attracts me more as a country of the future	25%	38%	37%	68
Better chance to improve career prospects in the UK	87%	9%	4%	68
Personal and family reasons (e.g. reunification)	19%	9%	72%	68
I have been awarded a scholarship in the UK (Ph.D., post-doc or other)	65%	4%	31%	68
I have been awarded a scholarship in the UK, otherwise I would have chosen another country	33%	29%	38%	68
My research activity is linked to the UK	15%	12%	73%	68

Source: Personal elaboration based on London's e-survey

Of course, the questionnaires provided other interesting insights into the reasons that made the two cities appealing for respondents. The choice of Lisbon, for example, did not seem overly dependent on economic reasons in the strict sense, especially when research facilities and career prospects in Portuguese universities are compared to those of UK's institutions. Following King's idea of '*love migrations*' (2002: 99-100), love, in its various form or specific interest in the city/culture/literature seemed to have an influential effect:

I don't think people choose Lisbon because of money or a long-term career. I personally chose Lisbon because of love. I literally fell in love with the city.
(Female, Ph.D. student, University of Lisbon.)

In the UK, where I applied and won a position, I could have had a better contract and better conditions, but then I realized other things matter to me. The choice was not difficult, here I feel at home. (Male, Ph.D. student, University of Lisbon.)

My interest in Portuguese literature. One can only deeper his proficiency in Portuguese literature by living where this literature has sprung up. (Male, Ph.D. student, Nova University of Lisbon.)

My Portuguese boyfriend was working in Italy. Then he decided to move back to Portugal and I followed him. (Female, Ph.D. student, Nova University of Lisbon.)

The quality of life at a lower cost of living – if compared to London – was another a relevant issue for half the respondents (51 per cent). Further, the atmosphere of substantial autonomy inside Lisbon's universities – in terms of organisation of the work – was regarded by many of them as a means to boost self-confidence (52 per cent). Likewise, a high number of respondents (52 per cent) included motivations linked to greater appreciation of their qualifications and skills, compared to Italy.

Respondents based in London placed particularly emphasis on the quality of the working environment in London's institutions and issues more closely linked to personal satisfaction. More specifically, they seemed enthusiastic about the appreciation of their skills and recognition of their academic work (87 per cent), easier paths to career progression (87 per cent) and the perception of an adequate level of independence, enhancing confidence in their competence and encouraging the creation of innovative ideas (84 per cent).

Further, most of the respondents declared that London attracted them since it is somehow perceived as the 'core of Europe', a prosper city riding on the crest of the wave of innovation and creativity, as the respondents that follow:

I didn't want to move and live anywhere else in the UK, because I think London is the only true international place in the UK. Then because London is Europe's financial centre, of course. (Male, Ph.D. student, LSE).

London is an international metropolis, a glut of creativity. (Female, professor, SOAS).

In a few cases, London and the UK were being perhaps even idealised:

I love the 'culturally vibrant' and 'super diverse' atmosphere of London! ['culturally vibrant' and 'super diverse' were written in English]. This is a true European capital city, a massive one. Then I love the fact that this is a country that tolerates and promotes diversity in terms of ethnic and cultural diversity, opinion and religion... (Female, Ph.D. student, Birkbeck, University of London).

Here the shops are always open and you can find almost everything you need, clearly, at the right price. Not to mention cutting-edge tech! One can really feel that everything happens here first. (Male, Ph.D. student, King's College London).

As clearly demonstrated by respondents' answers, the mobility decision process was, however, complex and involved a set of other personal motivations which are not recalled here. It is worth reminding that this is being done because the purpose of this activity was to collect useful insights into the most recurrent reasons shaping mobility, even though, as stated, each issue mentioned by respondents had, of course, an important personal implication in the choice.

5.3.4 *The meso-level of analysis*

Along with main macro and micro-level accounts that *drove* respondents to Lisbon and London, there are reasons which *encouraged* mobility, linking together sending and receiving contexts. In this sense, it is interesting to look now at the third stand or the 'meso-level' of analysis (Faist 1997) and the set of reasons that influenced academics' choices. As broadly discussed in chapter two, collaborations with the hosting institutions and academic networks constitute powerful means shaping mobility decision. This was most certainly the case for the respondents included in this study. Focusing on their narratives, indeed, it was clear that networks existed and inspired the direction of mobility. In a few cases, previous supervisors acted as 'intermediaries' or 'students' guarantors', liaising with respondents' hosting institutions or international

colleagues. In other cases, contacts were established by respondents during previous mobility experiences (e.g. Erasmus, international conferences and meetings):

[...] The fact that I knew my actual supervisor was also very important to me. Before moving to Lisbon, indeed, I've had a few interactions with him. (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

Coincidentally, I met a researcher working at [name of the institution], so then I decided to apply for a doctoral scholarship, but I didn't want to build up expectations. The real choice came when I was told I finally got the scholarship. (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

After my Erasmus in Portugal, I spent six months in Lisbon as a researcher. At first, I used to fly back and forth between Lisbon and Italy and then, once I got my master's degree, I've moved here for a Ph.D. (Male, post-doc research, Nova University of Lisbon.)

[...] Then I got an offer from two prestigious universities, here in London. I probably chose the one I am working now because I knew a few researchers that I met in a meeting and I liked their work. (Male, Ph.D. student, Imperial College London.)

During my Master almost all the professors of mine told me about doing a Ph.D. here. It was closer to Italy, compared to the US and a few of them had some good contacts. (Male, Ph.D. student, LSE.)

When I was writing my master's thesis I met a few researchers working in the lab where I am now, so I thought about applying here, which I eventually did. When they told me that I got the scholarship, I moved here. (Male, Ph.D. student, Queen Mary University of London.)

In line with what Avveduto (2001) and Mahroum (2000) argue in their studies, and further developed in chapter two, prestige and reputation seemed to be particularly strong criteria, especially in the choice of London's institutions. Respondents seemed, understandably, quite proud about being accepted in prestigious universities or departments. Although not always explicitly mentioned, many respondents based in London highlight an alleged relationship between *mobility decisions* and the *desire for excellence*, recalling the significance of the 'expectation of mobility' (Ackers 2005a; Morano-Foadi 2005; Ackers et al. 2008; Coey 2013):

Well, clearly the high quality of research work in my hosting lab was something very important for me and my career. (Male, post-doc researcher, UCL.)

Here in London there is one of the most attracting scientific community of Europe and not only. I was very much interested in being part of it myself. (Female, Ph.D. student, School of Advanced Studies, University of London.)

This university has a 'strong' reputation internationally, especially in my field. (Female, professor, Queen Mary University of London).

I've got a Marie Curie fellowship and I work in a prestigious university, surrounded by an enriching international network. I don't think I can ask for more. (Female, post-doc researcher, Queen Mary University of London.)

Finally, the two e-surveys highlighted that respondents based in the two cities had quite different aspirations and personal expectations. As the world café and the interviews then confirmed, many respondents based in Lisbon seemed to privilege the fact that they could work in a collaborative environment and – what seemed equally important – in a place geographically and culturally closer to Italy:

Here I have the possibility to work with nice colleagues. Then Lisbon has the privilege to be a southern European country. (Female, Ph.D. student, University of Lisbon.)

To be honest, any other southern European country allowing me to work in academia and my partner to find a decent job would be fine. (Female, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

I don't like the UK nor the language. Although there are other northern European countries that I like, and almost all of them offer much better work conditions compared to Italy or Portugal, I like the south of Europe. I'd rather change my job than move where it's cold! (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

I liked the university environment that I found here in Portugal during my Erasmus, which is, I think, 'more human' than in Italy. Then, since I am from southern Italy, I knew I'd have to move somewhere else, eventually. I thought that moving here would have been much more interesting than northern Europe, as many others think, instead. (Female, Ph.D. student University of Lisbon.)

On the other hand, most respondents based in London seemed to have diametrically opposed views. In fact, they stressed how leaving Italy and the south of Europe for a more competitive and meritocratic environment, granting fair treatment, was important for them:

Moving back to southern Europe? It represents all I ran away from. So why would I do that? [...] For a long time, during my studies at university, I believed in the existence of a meritocratic system, which I could finally find here. (Female, professor, King's College London.)

I might have to move again but for the time being I like here. Not in southern Europe, though. It's not competitive and I don't want to compromise my career (Male, professor, UCL.)

Here I think it's a question of priorities. Believe me, I do care about sun and quality of life, but not as much as building a healthy career. Maybe one day [I will move to Italy/southern Europe], not now. (Female, Ph.D. student, SOAS.)

In short, the strategic relevance of academic networks is reflected in a range of issues mentioned by respondents. In many cases, existing networks played a key role in helping to find new recruitment opportunities or securing a position, especially among those researchers in an early career stage. Further, the possibility to study and work in centres of prestige, surrounded by an academic elite, acted as a strong incentive to mobility, particularly among the respondents based in London. As stated in several occasions, universities in the UK enjoy global recognition, thus acting as a magnet for academics. Finally, as will be further developed in the next sections, location decisions did not seem as random as some respondents claimed them to be. Indeed, legitimate aspirations and personal expectations have emerged from the narratives of respondents, which influenced, at least to a certain extent, both the choice of the city and that of the hosting institution.

5.3.5 Future mobility intentions and plans

This whole thesis was conceived and developed in uncertain times for the Portuguese and the UK academia. More specifically, in Portugal, the possibility to establish a stable academic career path was made difficult, at least until 2014/2015, by the above mentioned new funding constraints (Figure 4.1) and the limited number of available post-doctoral research grants and contracts (Santos et al. 2016), many of which were temporary. In the UK, the well-known Brexit referendum – also known as United Kingdom European Union membership referendum – was held on 23rd June 2016, triggering great uncertainty about the UK's future relationships with the EU and the rights of the many EU nationals living in the UK. Although the situation is still unclear

and negotiations are underway, an inevitable degree of insecurity found a clear reflection in respondents' mood. Nonetheless, all considerations about the future reported by Lisbon's and London's respondents need to be considered hypothetical since, at the time of the e-surveys, none of them had accepted another academic position elsewhere.

Even though the professional experience of respondents in Lisbon was either 'very satisfactory' or 'satisfactory' (79 per cent), in most cases Portugal seemed to be seen a way-station. More specifically, 40 per cent of respondents reported they would move again in the next five years, while 38 per cent of them considered it possible. Similarly, respondents based in London considered their experience largely satisfactory (81 per cent) but many of them considered that a new relocation will be necessary (44 per cent) or possible (51 per cent).

Increasing difficulties in entering into new contracts or the need for greater professional stability (better contracts, possibly permanent jobs) were the most cited reasons among Lisbon's respondents:

My grant will expire in a couple of years. I am applying for a new one, but I am not at all sure I'll get one here. (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

Yes, I'm thinking about moving again to get a stable position (tenure-track) and a job for my partner, who is now unemployed. (Female, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

I've no idea but, as far as I like Lisbon and working here, I've got the feeling that I'll have to move once again, mainly because I reckon it will be easier to find a more stable position outside Portugal. (Male, post-doc researcher, University of Lisbon.)

On the other hand, in London, a further move was often conditional on Brexit:

I'm very disappointed with the outcome of this referendum, for political reasons (I don't think Brexit will have a positive impact on both the economy and the research world in the UK), but also for personal reasons (I'm no longer sure I want to stay here, and I'm not sure I'm welcome here anymore).

(Female, post-doc researcher, UCL.)

I still don't know where to go, but I lost interest in this country after Brexit.

(Male, Ph.D. student, Queen Mary University of London.)

Even when not specifically mentioned, a sense of uncertainty about the future emerged in the e-surveys, highlighting a clear correlation between academic mobility, increasingly precarious work status and uncertain times. Uncertainty emerged clearly among respondents with children, having troubles with planning family needs, like this respondent:

I really don't know... even because moving with children it's not that easy.

(Female, post-doc researcher, Birkbeck, University of London.)

Other respondents pointed to the fact that relocating once again would be difficult, but necessary to ensure a better medium-term future for them (better career prospects, greater professional satisfaction) and for their families (stability, reunification with partner):

So far, I've focused on countries with a large number of research centres such as France and the UK, to maximize the possibilities of ensuring a job in the same city for my wife and myself. But I think we'll move again, mainly because I won't have access to European funding, which so far represented a lot in the UK research system. (Male, post-doc researcher, King's College London.)

Curiously enough, only four respondents expressly specified that they actually wanted to move again.

I like new experiences, living outside Italy. Then, this certainly brings benefits to my professional career. Once I finish my Ph.D. I'll probably consider any other European country, especially the UK, Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Finland, as well as outside Europe, although this is much less likely. (Male, Ph.D. student, University of Lisbon.)

Yes, I am thinking about moving again, but not because of Brexit. [...] I would love to explore the world, while I have the chance! (Female, Ph.D. student, Birkbeck, University of London.)

To conclude, emerging from these comments is the fact that respondents seemed to constantly define and negotiate their positions into the place they were living at the time of the e-surveys, enhancing their ability to adapt but also balancing professional and personal life, expectations and costs. Future mobility plans were, indeed, often related to new job opportunities elsewhere, but equally to the desire of a better quality of life for them and their families. Further, especially among those at a later stage of their career, a desire of more stable life emerged clearly. To conclude, the places of a – hypothetical – future mobility are difficult to map, since, once again, they are in close relation to individuals' biographies or linked to the future development of scientific policy in Portugal and Brexit negotiations, in the UK.

5.4 World café and interviews: discussion and data capture

As thoroughly described in chapter three, the world café convened in Lisbon took place at IGOT, University of Lisbon. The university room was set up with three discussion tables (with three academics per table) and each table focused on a specific topic (Table 5.9). Similarly, the two face-to face interviews and the four Skype interviews with researchers based in London focused on three comparable questions, summarized in the same table (Table 5.9).

After the event/interview phase, audio data, written texts and notes were transcribed by myself. Taken together, the world café and the interviews proved to be effective in generating new reflections related to the topic, allowing for a deeper analysis of some of the issues that emerged in the two e-surveys. In this last section,

only meaningful finding will be explored, although recognising that people provided much longer and compelling narratives, of course.

Table 5.9 - Discussion topics

Question	Topic	Keywords
1	What does 'academic mobility' mean to you and what does it mean to be a 'mobile academic'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility • Migration • Internationalisation • Excellence/costs
2	Why should a foreign-born researcher choose a higher education institution in Lisbon/London (and why he/she should not)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic work environment • City/quality of life • Reputation/prestige of the institution • Personal/professional satisfaction
3 (Lisbon)	Lisbon: a way-station on a longer journey or not?	
3 (London)	What will Brexit mean for British universities and for non-British academic staff?	

Source: Personal elaboration based on the world café/interviews discussion topics

5.4.1 Topic 1: Academic mobility and the meaning of living 'a mobile life'

Academic mobility was mostly understood by most academics in Lisbon and London as a beneficial experience, from a personal and professional point of view. In this sense, researchers pointed to the several *benefits* of it:

So, mainly... the group pointed to the fact that moving abroad is an effective way to get to know ourselves and our culture better and then enhance our openness towards the outside world. In the end, we should all strive to challenge ourselves. (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

Even if we are going in a different direction now and, honestly, I don't know what to think about that [referring to Brexit], moving abroad can open

people's mind up and enhance the ability to put things into perspective. Then you know better than me that relocating and going abroad for conferences is essential in research. Interactions with other researchers and professors are fundamental for our future... the more, the better. (Female, professor, Queen Mary University of London.)

Once again, the relevance of developing successful networking skills emerged from some of their narratives. Indeed, when asked about the meaning of the above-mentioned phrase: *'interactions with other researchers are fundamental for our future'*, the professor quoted above added:

Well, academia is not only the place where innovative ideas emerge or are discussed. Let's be pragmatic... our articles need to be read, people need to know what we are doing and, on the other hand, we all need a feedback! Academic mobility enables all this, of course. Then, I think being part of a British university is a big advantage... there are many opportunities here, many good conferences and everybody uses English. (Female, professor, Queen Mary University of London.)

Further, it was a widespread perception among the world café's participants that, within the mobility process, the location decision is often complementary or correlated to personal aspirations and expectations:

[...] Then, a different matter is whether mobility boost our career development... well it could, but much depends on where one is moving, what one's looking for... Obviously, moving to Lisbon or London is not the same.

[Me: And why is that?]

Well it's because you would expect to find different things in the two cities, in the two universities as well, wouldn't you? I think that in many ways Lisbon is not that different from many Italian cities, at least, in the south of Italy... it's kind of familiar. I mean the people, the culture, and probably also professionally. I think you'll meet people looking for something different in

London [laughing]. We all know how competitive the environment can be there. (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

More broadly, it was implicit in the comments of most of them that mobility was not a simple nor a straightforward process. Mobility was, in a certain sense, as sought as necessary. This became particularly evident when people were asked to focus on what having a mobile life meant to them:

I like being here [Lisbon], but I would love to visit other places... I am sure I will, probably not even in the far future. Then, like other people have already said today, I am not sure there will be other opportunities for me here. Anyway, in the end this [living in various places] is one of the privileges of being an academic, I want to enjoy all the benefits of it! (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

That's a good question. Honestly, I feel privileged... I am taking so many planes! [...] Staying in the same university for a long time doesn't look good. On the other hand, 'jumping' from a temporary contract to another is not good either, which is why we are often moving that much. Well, so probably it's something in the middle, it's good for a while and then, when our priorities changes, it'd be good to have different options. (Female, Ph.D. student, Birkbeck, University of London.)

For me it was both, a mix of interest and necessity. I like living abroad, I like this lifestyle. Today I'm here [in London], tomorrow I might be somewhere else. Basically, I need to publish a lot and possibly in good journals, so that then I can move in other places, maybe the US, who knows. But I moved here because I wasn't happy in Italy, I didn't have a satisfying job, so I decided to apply for a Ph.D. in London. (Male, Ph.D. student, UCL.)

To conclude, respondents pointed out the benefits of *academic mobility* as a concept expressed in its most general terms. However, when they have been asked to

apply the same concept to academic mobility from Italy, they gave a much less optimistic outlook. This might suggest that, despite respondents being formally aware of the benefits that freedom of movement can offer – both in terms of better opportunities, professional and personal enrichment – they struggled to strike a balance between rhetoric and practice. Ultimately, they could not fully apply the concept to the mobility of academics from Italy as a completely free choice.

5.4.2 Topic 2: The pro and cons of living and doing research in Lisbon and London

Both in Lisbon and London, this was the longest phase of discussion. The participants of the world café engaged themselves in an articulated and intensive debate with each other. Similarly, those academics interviewed in London indulged my curiosity and talked extensively about what they considered the strengths and weaknesses of London and the UK higher education sector. More specifically, among the academics based in Lisbon, the following emerged, as a widely shared point of view:

Well, it wasn't a professionally-driven move, I mean... our academic career wasn't the leading motive. In fact, almost none of us moved because of a specific interest in the research centre... at least, this wasn't our priority. Basically, we've moved here because we like Lisbon. Some of us had already visited Lisbon and Portugal, other did their Erasmus here... [...] Well, many emphasised that they liked the city. In a few other cases there was a personal interest for the culture or the Portuguese history, but also because of the nice weather, places and landscapes. Generally, Lisbon has the privilege of being a southern European city! Maybe we tend to think of this that way because many of us today are from southern Italy. Anyway, there is a clear familiarity with our customs, our attitude. (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

Looking at the attraction of Lisbon's universities and its academic environment, respondents seemed to confirm what has already emerged from the e-surveys, namely the perception of greater meritocracy in the recruitment and selection processes and a friendlier working environment than in Italy, enhancing their potential as researchers:

We've also talked much about the risks associated with Lisbon's choice, instead of a safer choice, like London, for example. 'We choose Lisbon's universities today, but we risk... what about tomorrow?' Well, it's probably because it was a nice opportunity, even though we'll be likely to face problems in our future, professionally speaking. Nonetheless, it's definitely better than Italy, we've all agreed on that. Even though this is not El Dorado, it's always better than the total lack of opportunities in Italy. [...] Most of us remembered the joyful moment when we wrote our project, presented it to people who didn't know us at all and yet appreciated it for what it was, for its value! Well, almost everybody said that too. Also, the difference in the relationship with our supervisors or professors have been mentioned repeatedly, which clearly influence the way one lives the academic life. The environment is by far more inclusive and welcoming here. Appearances and first impressions can be deceiving, though! They also like hierarchies, formalities and bureaucracy, but in a less evident way. (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

Some of the conclusions drawn by the group of people gathered together for the world café were also found among London's respondents, namely the desire for a meritocratic recruitment and, more broadly, a meritocratic system, together with the aspiration of working in a non-hierarchically structured team. What makes the difference between the two groups of people, though, is that, among the latter academics, the desire to move away from Italy or southern Europe was once again frequently raised up. Greater levels of financial resources in the UK have been also mentioned and, in two cases, the institutional prestige of the host university was taken into consideration, almost as if it was a way to get some payback:

Well... as I said, I've always liked London, maybe because it's different from what I was used to. It's multicultural and people are much more open-minded. [...] Then professionally, well... it's definitely not like southern Europe, thankfully. I've sort of run away from that reality. Here, I don't have to thank anybody for what I achieved... and I've been accepted in a very good

university! [...] There is no comparison. The hierarchy, the distance between professors and students and the consequent sense of total exclusion which are part of our concept of academia simply don't exist here [in the UK]. (Female, Ph.D. student, Birkbeck, University of London).

I was curious about how research was done elsewhere, and I didn't like how things are done in Italy. I liked the idea of living in London very much, perhaps today I like it a bit less. [...] I don't mind the grey sky too much, as long as I am satisfied with my job and my career. We [Italian academics] might have a good theoretical background but they know how to practically do things... they generally have much more empirical experience and massive financial resources. Then, well... my university has a very good reputation abroad, you know... my department and my supervisor are well known too. (Male, post-doc researcher, King's College London.)

In addition, both the debate and the interviews have revealed that academic mobility did not necessarily translate into a change in the professional position of the researchers (e.g. academic advancement, career or pay progression), which is consistent with Cantwell's work (2009). What several of these academics have revealed through their narratives and comments is that, ultimately, this is not always the – main – purpose of mobility. On the one hand, mobility seemed to be generally more career oriented and individualised among London's respondents, whilst it seemed more influenced by other variables in the case of Lisbon's respondents.

More specifically, Italian academics in Lisbon moved from Italy to Portugal or from and to institutions which have almost the same level of knowledge, therefore as an example of what Teichler (2015: 12) calls 'horizontal mobility'. As repeatedly argued throughout this chapter, the fact that respondents were awarded a scholarship in Lisbon has provided a decisive impulse to mobility. However, the location decision was not based on economic calculations *tout court*, but rather shaped by a set of motivations, which included a perceived familiarity with the context of destination, but also greater meritocracy and personal satisfaction within Lisbon's universities.

London, instead, can be conceived as a clear example of ‘vertical mobility’ (Ibid.) for the Italian respondents working there. In fact, the association to a specific well-reputed host institution and the opportunity to work surrounded by a recognized scientific community presumably influenced their choice much more than the mere availability of a position elsewhere. Often, emerging from their narratives, was the fact that they did not seem to find a valid alternative to London and its universities, at least not in Europe. Further, a link between the institutional prestige and a possible ‘upward push’ in the academic career was visible among some of the interviewees in London, even if this was not always explicitly mentioned.

5.4.3 Topic 3: Permanent settlement or onward mobility?

As will be recalled from the e-surveys analysis, interestingly, many respondents declared their propensity to leave Lisbon and London in a near future. To get a better insight into this issue, future mobility intentions were further explored through the world café and interviews. Generally, there was support among the world café group that the mobility to Lisbon was, in many cases, a step towards future mobility pathways, within or outside Europe. Especially those in the early stage of their career, indeed, stressed that Portugal did not seem to offer the prerequisites for building a concrete academic career path or that, although they liked Lisbon, future mobility experiences were somehow as *wanted* as *expected* (Ackers 2005a; Ackers et al. 2008) from them:

It seems that almost all [the participants] here today agreed that those... let's say 'young' (and by young we mean academics in their mid-twenties to early thirties) live their experience here as temporary. [Lisbon] is a precondition for creating a more stable career elsewhere or a springboard for the future. Very often Brazil is considered after a period in Portugal. Then, if I may, I would like to add that.... I think... in some fields moving from a country to another, from an institution to another is absolutely normal! At least in my field [engineering], it's like that. I like Lisbon, but I don't think I'll be able to stay here for a long time and honestly, I want to see something different, like many others in my department. (World café discussion, Lisbon.)

On the other hand, a few other researchers had a different opinion, highlighting that, later in the academic career other considerations may shape or influence the mobility intention:

Well, but this is not the case for those among us... let's say... some of the seniors! I personally moved to Lisbon more than 10 years ago and I don't feel like moving again, not now at least. [At this point, another researcher adds:] indeed, I totally agree. We've moved here because we love Lisbon or because of personal reasons [...]. Anyway, these are motivations that have nothing to do with our profession or career as researchers. (World café, Lisbon).

As some of the people among the sample emphasised, academics in their early career appeared to be more inclined to move again. In part, this was because of a personal interest in future academic experiences abroad, but also because, as pointed out by Ackers (2005a; Ackers et al. 2008), physical mobility is often associated with the idea of a professional progression and, sometimes, this progression is implicitly expected. On the other hand, some of the group's pioneers but not only, stressed that, later in the career, other considerations may have the priority, such as the desire of a more stable life, partners, children or other family considerations.

Understandably, Brexit seemed to be generally the main cause for concern among London's respondents, although not all of them seemed comfortable in bringing it up or interested in talking extensively about it. Almost all the respondents mentioned that, before Brexit, the UK seemed to offer excellent conditions professionally. Interestingly, an interviewee explained to me that, in her case, the UK represented a compromise to ensure greater professional possibilities for her and her partner and, also, a choice based on linguistic reasons:

If you want, it was also a safer choice, you know. Both me and my partner have better opportunities here, and it was easier with the language, since he's British and we all speak English, more or less [...]. However, we can't plan now. Brexit's effects are still unknown so, everything is possible... (Female, post-doc researcher, UCL.)

Almost all the respondents focused on the fact that, because of Brexit, the UK may lose access to the EU funding it currently receives, which will possibly damage their institutions and, ultimately, their future in the UK. A respondent told me that, for the first time, she was not feeling welcome in the UK. Another researcher seemed worried about the fact that a friend of his, an EU citizen living in the UK, had his permanent residency requests refused. Summing up, a sense of anxiety was frequently shown, although some respondents told me that they do not think Brexit will have a true impact on their life and career. The fact that they are highly skilled workers somehow made them feel privileged and more protected. Ultimately, all considerations about the possible impact of Brexit are still premature, which is probably why respondents preferred to focus on their daily life and think about – possible – future mobility intentions as a choice more than a necessity.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explore the main findings provided through primary data collection. In particular, the main reasons that motivated and enabled the mobility of several Italian academics to Lisbon and London and their future mobility intentions have been analysed. The findings from the exploratory e-survey among Lisbon-based Italian academics and the world café hosted at IGOT, University of Lisbon, seemed to suggest that the choice of the city was due to a variety of reasons and not solely related to economic calculation.

More specifically, the analysis has shown that the very fact that respondents were awarded a scholarship in Lisbon played a significant role in the choice of Portugal over other possible destinations. This finding points to a clear correlation between the increase in resources to support research activities and the attraction of academics, of course. This, in turn, provides a further concrete illustration of the fact that the policy measures and strategies implemented in Portugal since the early 2000s, thoroughly discussed in chapter four, had a certain impact on the ground.

In addition, the analysis has shown that other variables played a relevant role in the choice of Lisbon. Among them, cultural proximity and familiarity, together with a lower cost of living compared to other EU capital cities, such as London. Focussing on Lisbon's HE institutions, many respondents appreciated the atmosphere of autonomy

inside the universities and the perception of a greater valorisation of their qualifications and skills, compared to Italy. The meritocratic recruitment process was also very often mentioned, contrary to what was perceived in Italy.

Furthermore, it has emerged from both the e-survey and the interviews that London was somehow perceived as 'Europe's navel', therefore as a fascinating multicultural city with a dynamic atmosphere. In close correlation with this, there was the fact that London's HE institutions have a long-standing prestige and an enviable reputation within Europe and beyond. In addition, the well-resourced environment and the opportunity to work surrounded by an international academic elite played, of course, a relevant role in respondents' choice. Greater meritocracy, the quality of the working environment and issues more closely linked to personal satisfaction were also mentioned by many respondents as particularly attractive features.

Interestingly, a large majority of respondents in both cities tended to consider academic mobility a normal practice for researchers and an opportunity to grow professionally and personally. In practice, however, there seemed to be considerable concern about the lack of a stable future in the two cities. In Lisbon, this seemed to be mostly linked to the precarious work status of many of them, who reported a difficulty in securing a stable academic position or accessing new funding. More broadly, the worrisome relationship between current EU academic mobility and the increasingly insecure nature of academic careers is an issue that was highlighted by most respondents and which is most certainly worthy of further inquiries. In London, a legitimate cause of concern was Brexit and its rather uncertain effects, even though not all respondents felt comfortable in dealing with this issue.

Overall, these considerations seem to suggest that a mixture of *choice* and *necessity* often drove respondents' mobility from Italy. In fact, the relevance of compromises and negotiations very often emerged from their narratives, as issues influencing their career path as well as their personal lives.

6. Conclusions

This thesis has explored and compared the mobility of Italian academics to Lisbon and London, as examples of long-term displacements from and to the European south and from the south to the north of Europe. Through both the critical analysis of secondary and primary data, it has sought to highlight the main structural features of these mobility patterns and to understand what has triggered, enabled or constrained the relocations of Italian academics to the two cities. More broadly, each chapter of this thesis has offered meaningful insights into the several ways in which intra-EU academic mobility can be conceived and experienced, providing useful tools to gain a fuller picture of its impact on academics' career paths and daily lives.

The main purpose of this closing chapter is to present an overview of the main findings, bring them together and draw the concluding statements. To this end, the first section of the chapter revisits the purpose of this study, framing it into the relevance of academic mobility as a field of research. Secondly, the core findings of the study will be discussed, together with their implications and linked to the research questions that the thesis addressed. Finally, the chapter concludes by showing possible areas for further research.

6.1 Academic mobility as an emerging field of study

Mobility has always been part of academia, since the production of new knowledge and its dissemination were at the heart of universities' mission (Kim 2009; Bauder 2015). However, in Europe, it is only over the past two decades that the number of academics engaging in cross-borders networks, collaborations and long-term displacements, has increased exponentially (Teichler 2015). In general, this development coincided with the implementation of neo-liberal policy measures looking

at the higher education sector as an '*indicator of economic competitiveness*' (Kim 2009: 396) governed by market-driven logics, according to which '*the university's main function is now to capture knowledge and turn it into profitable outputs*' (Cairns et al. 2017: 42).

As extensively discussed in chapter two, the theoretical understanding for academic mobility has traditionally been framed within the 'push-pull models'. Broadly speaking, the push-pull perspectives suggest that students and academics are pushed to move by several factors, which include the lack of job opportunities and social and political instability in the home country. On the other hand, researchers and scientists are pulled to the host countries by better economic or educational opportunities (Altbach 2004). Over time, these models have been challenged on the ground of their excessive simplicity – push and pull factors were indeed considered mutually exclusive – and their inability to capture the broad variety of aspects shaping mobility. Among the latter, there are the capacity of institutional bodies to influence the direction of the flows through specific policies and strategies (Iredale 2001) and the fact that globalisation processes are facilitating labour mobility, without necessarily benefitting one country at the expense of another (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997).

Despite the extension of the reference framework, the understanding for mobility in academia as an object of inquiry is still very much in its infancy, mostly considered as of '*a positive force*' (Robertson 2010a: 4), contributing to scientific excellence (European Commission 2014a). Still left out of this discourse is, for example, that current academic mobility patterns differ substantially across countries, even within the EU itself. In fact, Europe is experiencing an unbalanced circulation of academics and knowledge among member states and less prestigious universities – particularly in eastern and southern Europe – are struggling to compete with the wealthier ones (Francovich 2000; Ackers 2005b; Welch 2008). As discussed in chapter two, recent studies (Labrianidis 2014; Cenci 2015; Gomes et al. 2015; Masanet and Ingellis 2017; Cairns et al. 2017) are pointing to the fact that the 2008 economic downturn and the subsequent application of austerity measures are causing a further impoverishment of the already disadvantaged southern European labour markets and academia. In fact, both new cuts in R&D funding and the high level of mobility among

academics and highly skilled workers coming from the Mediterranean Europe are challenging *de facto* the notion of ‘brain circulation’.

Drilling down from the macro to the meso and micro-level, the processes leading individuals to choose specific places and host institutions are still unclear (Cantwell 2009). Besides that, a broad variety of accounts shape the timing and direction of these movements (Coey 2013). To the best of my knowledge, however, the relationship between them and the macro and meso-levels has not been properly evaluated yet. Tracking and comparing different intra-EU mobility patterns has therefore proved to be a useful means to enhance a robust understanding for this complex and multifaceted phenomenon. More specifically, this study has explored three areas of inquiry, each of which addressed specific questions that guided the readers towards a deeper and more concrete understanding of the topic. In the following paragraphs, the main findings of each of the three areas of investigation are explored in detail.

6.2 ‘Data storytelling’: exploring the contexts

At the most general level, this study intended to set out a broad overview of the contexts in which physical mobility was conceived or the macro conditions that influenced and shaped the mobility decisions of Italian academics. In this sense, the main policies and programmes to foster research and innovation and promote the attraction of academic staff adopted in Italy, Portugal and the UK since the late 1990s were analysed in chapter four, underlying their purposes and main outcomes. In addition, an overview of the mobility trends of Italian academics to Lisbon and London and the main changes that occurred between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015 was presented in the same chapter. This was done throughout the analysis of a set of secondary data supplied by the Portuguese *Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência* (DGEEC) and, in the United Kingdom, by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

6.2.1 *The evolution of R&D expenditure and science and innovation policy agenda*

The first observation made in relation to the policy measures and strategies adopted in the three countries was that they seemed driven, to a large extent, by specific national interests and the logic of competition among member states, therefore reflecting the aforementioned neo-liberal approach to higher education (Kim 2009;

Cairns et al. 2017). This finding is consistent with Musselin's studies (2004 and 2005) who suggests that a broad variety of academic labour markets still exist in Europe and they are mostly nationally oriented.

In Italy, the necessity to reverse 'brain drain' by facilitating the return of Italian academics was found to be the leading factor that guided the implementation of science policies, mainly establishing tax incentives for those academics deciding to return. Yet previous studies (Beltrame 2007, Balduzzi and Rosina 2011 and Sbalchiero and Tuzzi 2017) have clearly demonstrated that the singular nature of the Italian situation – compared to other European countries – is its inability to attract researchers of any nationality from abroad, rather than merely retain Italian academics within national borders.

Another important observation that emerged from the study is that, overall, the efforts made in Italy did not yield the desired results, since the policy initiatives looked like a fragmented answer to the issue, more than a long-term solution to the long-lasting problems that affect the Italian scientific system. These include the chronic underfunding for research activities and the structural difficulty of incorporating a younger generation of academics. In this regard, it was highlighted that over the last fifteen years, the Italian expenditure on R&D has been slightly more than half that of other European countries represented in the G8 group and one of the lowest among the European countries. On the other hand, the introduction of three-year temporary positions, which have replaced the former status of tenured researcher, has increased precariousness and insecurity among the researchers based in Italy (Donina et al. 2015). Finally, in accordance with other works (Cenci 2015), the current study pointed to the fact that both the insufficient levels of R&D investments and the difficulty to secure a job position in academia – and then moving up to a professorship position – are structural weaknesses, which have been exacerbated by the recent economic recession, therefore acting as a further incentive for mobility.

Portugal and Italy belong to the same geographical area, that is the south of Europe, which, as previously stated, has traditionally shown a limited capacity to compete effectively in the attraction for researchers with wealthier European countries and more prestigious European universities (Ackers 2005b; Welch 2008; Cenci 2015). Nonetheless, previous research (among them, Horta and Blasi 2016; Heitor et al. 2014;

Delicado 2010a) has shown that recent science policies have led to some positive consequences on the Portuguese scientific and technological system, making Portugal a virtuous example among Mediterranean countries worth to be considered.

Emphasis was placed on the factors that enabled the progressive and crucial development of the Portuguese scientific system. A key finding was that Portugal ensured a progressive increase in the expenditure on research and development (GERD) since 2000, and particularly from 2006 to 2010, becoming the only southern European country significantly shortening distances between the south and north of Europe. It was also highlighted, though, that new dramatic funding cuts started in 2010, after the economic crisis and as part of the 'austerity package', are currently reducing the virtuous dynamic triggered by the policies analysed and proving that, as suggested by previous studies (Heitor and Horta (2012)), the Portuguese scientific system has not yet achieved maturity. Equally important was the investment in a more outward-looking international perspective, which led – inter alia – to the creation of the FCT, the main public funding agency in Portugal, ensuring quality standards and greater transparency in the selection process.

The mobility of Italian researchers to Lisbon analysed in this thesis was considered in this 'positive context', whilst recognizing that most of the Italian academics interviewed for this research tended to see Portugal as a way-station, due to the fact they hold temporary positions. As stated in chapter four, indeed, recent evidence (Cairns et al. 2017) suggests that Portuguese academia is still dependent on a 'dual knowledge labour market', characterised by a small number of senior principal investigators and the members of the team they coordinate, normally junior researchers, holding temporary academic positions. This means that, similarly to what is happening in Italy, short and medium-term positions – and hence precarious employment situations – are still frequent in Portuguese academia especially among the younger generation of researchers, bringing incertitude and, of course, onward mobility.

At the other extreme, the UK scientific system stands out for its strong performance, being generally recognised among the most competitive systems at worldwide level. In chapter four, it was stressed that even though the national investment in R&D has been historically under 2 per cent of GDP or lower than competitors such as Germany and France, the United Kingdom is one of the most

successful countries in attracting researchers from all over the world. This means that, unlike Italy and Portugal, in the early 2000, it was already experiencing an intensive level of 'brain circulation' (Milio et al. 2012). This was a matter of significant importance, which was given due consideration during data comparison. Overall the present study indicated that the UK's system strength lied in the long-lasting scientific capital achieved, the long-term massive investment plan, the wise mix of some Rs' policies – return, restriction, recruitment, reparation, resourcing and retention policies (Lindsay Lowell 2002) – as well as on the introduction of programmes to ease the immigration of non-UK academics.

To sum up, the policy analysis has shown that reflecting on different patterns of academic mobility means, above all, considering the phenomenon as in constant evolution and tightly connected to the places in which it occurs. Therefore, this study has looked at academic mobility not merely as a straightforward identification of push or pull factors, but rather taking into consideration how the variety of circumstances – at the macro, meso and micro-level scale – can shape mobility decisions.

6.2.2 DGEEC and HESA data analysis

The second part of chapter four presented a descriptive analysis of DGEEC and HESA data on the evolution of Italian academic staff in Lisbon and London higher education institutions between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015. Further, it looked at the distribution of Italian academics across institutions, disciplines and employment functions, according to the latest available data. Albeit with the limitations thoroughly discussed in chapter three and recalled in chapter four, this data provided the basis to take further our understanding for the two mobility patterns.

The first original finding concerned the fact that in both cities the number of Italian academics has grown rapidly since the early 2000s. Nonetheless, the size of this increase was different in the two cities. In London – where the research base has long been known for its quality, research infrastructures and well-resourced environment – the number of Italian academic staff has grown around three times between 2000/2001 and 2014/2015 (latest available year). In Lisbon, the number of Italian Ph.D. students has grown around twenty-four times from 2000/2001 and 2013/2014 (latest available data) and that of Ph.D. holders has grown around ten times in seven years (from

2004/2005 to 2011/2012, where 2011/2012 was the latest available data). This seems to suggest a correlation between the increase in the number of Italian academics in Portugal and a reasonable effectiveness of policy actions and strategies implemented up until that moment.

Another relevant point was made about the distribution of Italian staff by host institutions. In Lisbon, these were the University of Lisbon, which, since 2013, includes the Technical University of Lisbon, and the Nova University of Lisbon. In London, most Italian academics were found, unsurprisingly, within the Russell Group institutions. This latter finding reflects the remarkable importance of prestige and reputation in the choice of the host institution, which was also strongly stressed by respondents based in London in the e-survey and then in the interviews.

The distribution of Italian academics in Lisbon and London HEIs by scientific discipline has shown the following. In 2011/2012, within Lisbon's universities, a certain concentration of Italian Ph.D. students and Ph.D. holders was found in the fields of humanities, education and social sciences. In the same year, in London, Italian academic staff were spread across different fields: medicine, dentistry and health sciences, natural science, engineering and architecture, economics, management and business, and, finally, mathematics and computer science. Interestingly, secondary data has shown a sort of 'lack of disciplinary boundaries', since around 50 per cent of Italian staff in both cities was employed in other scientific disciplines. Overall, this observation suggests that the Portuguese academic sector is becoming well known in a wide range of disciplines, also thanks to the development of policies and strategies that increased the international visibility of Portuguese academia. Equally important is the fact that London's institutions remain a magnet for Italian academics in a broad variety of disciplines and particularly those interpreted as the driving forces for economic growth and innovation.

Finally, data has revealed that, in 2011/2012, two third of Italian academics in Lisbon were Ph.D. students. This finding points to the fact that in Portugal, at least until that moment, there was a growing knowledge labour market for early career researchers, due to the number of scholarships available. Yet, the lower share of Italian Ph.D. holders, compared to that of Italian Ph.D. students, could be linked to the fact that, often, the positions available in the Portuguese academia are temporary (short or

medium-term positions), possibly discouraging academics from remaining in the Portuguese academic sector.

In London, in 2014/2015 Italian academic staff, was mostly teaching and researching, even though the proportion of staff doing research only was still significant. The fact that in London a large proportion of Italian staff was employed with a research only contract, which is normally, though not only, a position on a fixed-term basis, points to the fact that uncertain and precarious employment conditions have become an increasingly common feature, possibly discouraging the investment in a professional career in academia.

6.3 Exploring the reasons

To further our understanding of the two academic mobility patterns, the second area of inquiry focussed on the profile of several Italian academics based in the two cities, the conditions that have triggered their mobility decisions and the attraction of Portugal and the UK and their higher education institutions. More specifically, the analysis of secondary data exposed above has been combined with an exploratory investigation based on primary data. Thus, the following section discusses the key findings from the e-surveys disseminated in Lisbon and London. As repeatedly emphasised, the samples obtained through the e-surveys were significant but not representative, therefore any generalisation was carefully avoided.

6.3.1 Respondents' profile

By coincidence, the number of respondents in the two capital cities was exactly the same. In total, the e-surveys drew responses from 136 respondents, 68 in Lisbon and 68 in London. This means that, approximately, 52 per cent of potential respondents based in Lisbon replied and 38 per cent of those based in London. Overall, emerging from the e-surveys is that respondents were quite young and almost equally split between women and men. In fact, respectively 75 per cent of the respondents based in Lisbon and 82 per cent of those based in London were under 40 years old. In Lisbon, 41 per cent of respondents were women and 59 per cent men. In London, 49 per cent were women and 51 per cent men. Further, at the time of data collection, respondents based in Lisbon were working especially in the fields of humanities and education, whilst those

in London were mostly employed in the field of medicine, dentistry and health science. As stated in chapters three and five though, this latter feature can be due to the activation of personal networks, which was strong particularly in the case of London.

Most significant was the finding that those respondents based in Lisbon appeared to be living in Portugal longer than their colleagues based in London but, ultimately, the number of university professors was much higher among London's respondents (professors in Lisbon's universities were 10 per cent of the total and 30 per cent in London). In other words, despite having moved to London quite recently, many of the respondents based in London had access to desirable positions, namely a professorship. On the other hand, respondents based in Lisbon were found to hold especially short-term or medium-term positions (53 per cent of them were in fact post-docs or research assistants). In this regard, it was repeatedly mentioned throughout this thesis that, at least until 2014/2015, Portuguese academia was experiencing uncertain times. In fact, on the one hand, the scientific system is characterized by a 'dual knowledge labour market', which means that there is a consistent gap between a small number of principal investigators and a much larger number of younger researchers holding temporary, and therefore precarious, academic positions (Cairns et al. 2017). On the other hand, new cuts in R&D funds started after the 2008 crisis are further weakening the system's ability to achieve the defined policy objectives discussed in this thesis.

6.3.2 Mobility and location decisions

Interestingly, the analysis of the e-surveys has shown that it is difficult and perhaps inappropriate to identify and isolate a single rationale that led respondents to move to Lisbon and London. In this regard, among the various reasons proposed in the e-surveys, a vast majority of respondents chose the lack of funding to support research activities and the perception of a lack of meritocracy in Italian universities. Equally strong were job instability reasons and the perception of cases of corruption or nepotism in working environments. These were also the main reasons why the idea of moving back to Italy seemed unrealistic for both the respondents based in Lisbon and those based in London.

Overall, this set of data represented a step forward in the analysis of what the Italian scientific system and academia lack at the macro-level. The core idea is that the combined action of new recruitment procedures and the lack of proper funding for research activities is leading to the reduction of positions available (Rossi 2014), making Italian academia increasingly unattractive to the younger generations. The perception of job instability is the most probable consequence of the introduction of temporary, non-tenured positions for researchers (Law 240/2010 or 'Gelmini reform'), overexposing academics to insecurity. Further, the lack of meritocracy and the perceived corruption or nepotism seemed to exacerbate all this. In this regard, respondents stressed the fact that episodes of corruption and nepotism exist within Italian academia, weakening the proper functioning of the scientific system and undermining confidence in academics and public opinion. However, the extension of this phenomenon still needs to be properly evaluated. To avoid oversimplification which, in turns, may lead to the creation of stereotypes, extensive evidence needs to be collected. Further, as long as available resources for research are scarce and concentrated on a limited number of institutions and people, it is very likely that cases of corruption or nepotism will increase, with the risk of perpetuating a vicious cycle.

At the micro scale, an interesting finding to emerge from the e-surveys was that the mobility decisions and the location processes were tightly connected to respondents' – real or imagined – perceptions, aspirations and personal expectations. This also reflects what has been pointed out in a recent study: *'the reasons for doing scientific research outside Italy cannot be adequately expressed if we only consider a generic idea of "abroad" as a homogeneous, undifferentiated unit, because it seems to be influenced by the different countries and scientific contexts where our interviewees were operating'* (Sbalchiero and Tuzzi 2017: 178).

Further, the very fact that respondents were awarded a scholarship in the two cities played a significant role in the location decision and was particularly strong among Lisbon's respondents. This shows that, overall, both the policy measures adopted in Portugal and the increase in funding for research discussed in this thesis had a relevant impact on the ground. In this sense, the drastic reduction in the number of scholarships made in Portugal after the 2008 crisis is starting to affect the Portuguese scientific system, once again challenging its capacity to attract academic staff. It is, however,

premature to speculate about the possible outcomes of this situation, since much depends on Portugal's ability to recover from the crisis and then increase spending on science, reaching the pre-crisis levels.

Another interesting insight was that the reasons that triggered respondents' mobility to either Lisbon or London were not purely linked to economic calculation *tout court*, which is in line with previous work on the subject (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014). For instance, cultural proximity had a relevant role in the choice of Lisbon, together with a lower cost of living compared to other EU capital cities. On the other hand, London seemed to have attracted respondents because of its multicultural and dynamic atmosphere, which somehow made them feel at 'Europe's navel'. At the meso-level scale, the reputational prestige of the host institutions and the fact they could work with an international academic elite were reported to be crucial features, encouraging the mobility towards London. The choice of London seemed less connected to the fact that respondents were awarded a scholarship and much more linked to the perception of London and its universities as desirable places to live and work. Indeed, emerging from respondents' narratives, was the fact that they did not seem to find a valid alternative to London and its universities, at least not in Europe.

Overall, these considerations seem to suggest that respondents were led towards mobility by a combination of *choice* and *necessity*. In fact, although they seemed formally aware of the benefits that freedom of movement can offer – in terms of both better job opportunities and personal enrichment – they struggled to find an appropriate balance between rhetoric and practice. Moreover, they found it difficult to fully apply the concept of 'brain circulation' to their mobility paths and, more broadly, to the mobility of academics from and towards the Italian academic sector.

6.4 Fostering a collaborative dialogue and a critical reflection

The purpose of the world café convened in Lisbon and the interviews with some Italian academics based in London was to explore the e-surveys' results more in depth and give a voice to some of the academics who are, ultimately, the protagonists of this thesis. The contents of both activities unavoidably overlapped to a certain extent with that of the e-surveys. Nonetheless, both the narratives provided during the world café

and the interviews proved to be a rich source of analysis to take further our understanding of the mobility and career practices of the people included in this study.

A key point that emerged during the two activities was that, to a large extent, respondents tended to describe academic mobility as a normal and positive scientific practice and a comfortable lifestyle. Again, they stressed that relocating to new institutions is an opportunity to enhance the ability to adapt to different teamwork and to diverse ways of thinking and, sometimes, an opportunity to learn a new language. In practice, however, there was once again some discrepancy between the general idea and its actual application, since many of them did not seem very keen to – potential – future mobility.

When the relationship between academic mobility and the actual ‘embedding’ in a place was explored more in depth, indeed, some concern was raised. In Lisbon, many respondents stressed that the prospect of a stable life in Portugal seems to be increasingly difficult, because of the precarious work status of many of them (mainly, because of temporary contracts) and difficulty in accessing new funding. In London, a legitimate cause of concern was Brexit and its rather uncertain effects, even though not all respondents felt comfortable in dealing with this issue. The future of these – and many others – EU academics may be at stake, but this is only the early stage of what seems to be a long negotiation process, therefore it would be a mistake to jump to premature conclusion.

What was clear, though not always explicit, is that a sense of insecurity emerged in many of the respondents’ narratives. Special concern was raised among those respondents with children and those with a family. However, they all pointed to the fact that compromises are necessary when living a *mobile life*, showing great capacity to negotiate their career prospects with family needs and stability.

6.5 Final remarks and future research

This evidence-based research pointed to the heterogeneity of academic mobility patterns across European countries. This is partly due to the diverse science policies implemented in a number of member states – which, to a large extent, seem to support quite different political intents – and their different outcomes. In addition, heterogeneity refers to the differences in the reasons triggering, enabling and

containing the mobility of academics coming from different institutional contexts. In this respect, the present study stated that explanations of intra-EU academic mobility are not straightforward, since, in Europe, academically superior scientific systems coexist with more peripheral and less attractive ones. Further, European higher education institutions have very different levels of knowledge, status and reputational prestige, which are relevant preconditions for success in the competition for talents. Overall, this suggests that in-depth analysis on the subject should be framed within the context in which it takes place, rather than looking at academic mobility as a generic or universal concept (Carrozza and Minucci 2014).

At the most general level, the mobility of Italian researchers to Lisbon seemed to be strongly related to the positive period – in terms of science policy measures implemented and the roll-out of funding for R&D – that the Portuguese scientific system was experiencing during the last two decades or, at least, until 2010. The mobility towards London, instead, can be included within the more traditional idea of mobility ‘from the south to the north of Europe’. In fact, London and more broadly the UK higher education institutions are well-established poles of attraction for researchers from all over the world.

More specifically, the primary data collected in this study revealed that the two trajectories – from Italy to Lisbon’s HEIs and from Italy to London’s HEIs – can be qualified respectively as examples of ‘horizontal mobility’ and ‘vertical mobility’, as conceptualised by Teichler (2015:12). In the former case, indeed, academics moved from and towards institutions with more or less the same levels of academic quality, whilst in the latter case, they moved towards more advanced systems, wishing for ‘*a leap upwards*’ (Ibid.). Altogether, the reasons behind the choice of two places and institutions point to the relevant role of respondents’ personal expectations. In fact, under equal conditions (that of being offered a scholarship or contract, which was found to be the case for all the respondents), the choice of the university and place to live and work seemed to depend much on the real or imagined conditions expected in the host institution/city. Further, the *value* given – more or less explicitly – by respondents to their relocation to Lisbon and London was found to be quite different, once again reflecting the role of their perceptions and expectations.

It is still unclear, however, what is going to happen in the next future, after new cuts in funding for R&D activities in Portugal and in the post Brexit period in the UK. In these rather uncertain times, the future of the academics interviewed in this study – and not only – is potentially at stake. Therefore, it would be interesting for future research to follow the events closely and evaluate their impact on the mobility of foreign-born academics towards the two cities. For instance, carrying out a longitudinal analysis could be of some interest. In this sense, the sample of Italian academics considered in this thesis may be interviewed again in a few years.

More broadly, the study area needs to be expanded and more evidence is needed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the mobility of Italian academics to Portugal and the UK. In this regard, future research can further the understanding of the phenomenon by considering all Portuguese and the UK higher education institutions with Italian academic staff. Further, the lack of information about the number of Ph.D. students in the UK higher education sector was, as mentioned repeatedly, an inevitable drawback of this research. In this sense, future research may include this information in the secondary data calculation.

Also notable are the ways in which geography, mainly in terms of proximity, can influence mobility choices and affect the attractiveness of a place (Coey 2013). As argued repeatedly throughout this thesis, geographically or reputationally peripheral institutions are less competitive than the wealthier ones, of course. However, among the several subjective reasons shaping location decisions, geographical proximity seems to have an influential role. For instance, some of the respondents based in Lisbon pointed out that they liked the city because of its *familiarity* with Italy. On the other hand, several respondents based in London pointed out that London was a *better choice* compared, for example, to the far-away United States. More broadly, other evidence is needed to further explore and ground together how the perception of *proximity* (e.g. linguistic, cultural and geographical) can influence the mobility choices of academics.

Finally, future research may want to explore more in depth the worrisome relationship between current EU academic mobility and the increasingly insecure nature of academic career paths, which is largely due to the proliferation of temporary and insecure job positions.

Appendix 1 – E-Survey Lisbon



FUNDAÇÃO
CALOUSTE
GULBENKIAN

E-survey

Come prima cosa, desidero ringraziarla per avere deciso di dedicare del tempo a questo questionario.

L'obiettivo generale di questa ricerca è ottenere una visione d'insieme della mobilità di alcuni lavoratori italiani altamente qualificati (dottorandi, dottori di ricerca e docenti), inscrivendo il fenomeno nel nuovo flusso di emigrazione dai paesi del sud d'Europa. Più nel dettaglio, si tratta di uno studio comparato sulla mobilità di ricercatori e docenti italiani a Lisbona e a Londra. Per questo motivo, il questionario verrà presentato ad alcuni dottorandi, dottori di ricerca e docenti che vivono a Lisbona (come esempio di mobilità sud-sud Europa) e ad altri che vivono a Londra (come esempio di mobilità sud-nord).

Tutte le informazioni contenute nelle sue risposte saranno trattate nel totale rispetto dell'anonimato e confidenzialità dei dati. I risultati dei dati raccolti saranno diffusi in forma aggregata e, pertanto, non verrà mai riportato il suo nome.

Può decidere di qualsiasi momento di ottenere la conferma, l'aggiornamento o la cancellazione (totale o parziale) dei dati inviati.

Nel caso avesse ulteriori domande, non esiti a contattarmi: fabiana.minneci@gmail.com

*** Required**

Indirizzo mail con il quale è stato(a) contattato(a) *

Questa informazione è richiesta al solo fine di evitare di ricontattare persone che hanno già risposto al questionario.

Informazioni generali

1. Sesso *

- ☐ Donna
☐ Uomo
☐ Non risponde

2. Età *

3. Stato Civile *

- ☐ Libero
☐ Coniugato(a)
☐ Convivente/unione di fatto
☐ Separato(a)/divorziato(a)
☐ Vedovo(a)
☐ Non risponde

Se coniugato(a)/convivente/in una unione di fatto, dove è nato(a) il(la) suo(a) compagno(a)?

4. Luogo di nascita *

Regione

- ☐ Abruzzo
- ☐ Basilicata
- ☐ Calabria
- ☐ Campania
- ☐ Emilia - Romagna
- ☐ Friuli - Venezia Giulia
- ☐ Lazio
- ☐ Liguria
- ☐ Lombardia
- ☐ Marche
- ☐ Molise
- ☐ Piemonte
- ☐ Puglia
- ☐ Sardegna
- ☐ Sicilia
- ☐ Toscana
- ☐ Trentino - Alto Adige
- ☐ Umbria
- ☐ Valle d'Aosta
- ☐ Veneto
- ☐ Other:

5. Cittadinanza *

- ☐ Italiana
- ☐ Italiana e portoghese
- ☐ Non risponde
- ☐ Other:

6. Da quanto tempo vive a Lisbona, all'incirca? *

- ☐ Meno di un anno
- ☐ Dai 1 ai 5 anni
- ☐ Dai 5 agli 8 anni
- ☐ Da circa 10 anni
- ☐ Da più di 10 anni

7. Si è iscritto(a) all'A.I.R.E (Anagrafe Italiani residenti all'estero)? *

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No

☐ Non risponde

8. In quale "freguesia" di Lisbona vive? *

9. Ha figli? *

Se la risposta è no, vada alla domanda 10, per favore.

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No
- ☐ Non risponde

Se ha figli, in che anno sono nati? Dove sono nati e in quale paese vivono attualmente?

10. Con quali lingue straniere è in grado di sostenere una conversazione? *

- ☐ Portoghese
- ☐ Inglese
- ☐ Spagnolo
- ☐ Francese
- ☐ Tedesco
- ☐ Other:

11. Quali lingue utilizza quotidianamente? *

- ☐ Portoghese
- ☐ Italiano
- ☐ Inglese
- ☐ Spagnolo
- ☐ Francese
- ☐ Tedesco
- ☐ Other:

12. Qual è la sua attuale occupazione professionale? *

- ☐ Studente di dottorato
- ☐ Post-doc/Ricercatore
- ☐ Docente
- ☐ Other:

13. Dove lavora attualmente? *

Indichi, per favore, il nome dell'università/istituto di ricerca o altro e il paese in cui lavora attualmente.

14. Quale titolo di studio possiede? *

Indichi tutti i titoli di studio che possiede, per favore.

- ☐ Laurea triennale
- ☐ Laurea specialistica o magistrale
- ☐ Diploma di laurea (vecchio ordinamento)
- ☐ Dottorato di ricerca
- ☐ Diploma di specializzazione
- ☐ Master (I o II livello)
- ☐ Altro

Per ciascun titolo di studio posseduto indichi, per favore, l'anno in cui ha terminato il ciclo di studi, la facoltà cui era iscritto(a) e il paese in cui ha frequentato il corso. *

15. Durante l'università ha partecipato a qualche programma di mobilità internazionale (per es. progetto Erasmus, Leonardo)? *

Se la risposta è no, vada alla domanda 16, per favore.

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other:

Se sì, in che città?

Indichi, per favore, la città e il paese.

Quanto tempo ci è rimasto?

Cosa l'ha indotto a scegliere questa città?

16. Quanto è soddisfatto(a) della formazione ricevuta durante il suo percorso universitario? *

Metta una croce nel riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta, considerando una scala che va da 1 a 5, dove 1 rappresenta la completa insoddisfazione e 5 la completa soddisfazione.

	1. Per niente soddisfatto(a)	2. Poco	3. Abbastanza	4. Molto	5. Completamente soddisfatto(a)
Intensità	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Quanto è soddisfatto(a) delle persone che ha incontrato all'interno dell'università? *

Metta una croce nel riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta, considerando una scala che va da 1 a 5, dove 1 rappresenta la completa insoddisfazione e 5 la completa soddisfazione.

	1. Per niente soddisfatto(a)	2. Poco	3. Abbastanza	4. Molto	5. Completamente soddisfatto(a)
Intensità	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Progetto migratorio / mobilità internazionale

18. Ricorda quando ha cominciato a pensare di voler emigrare? Come è nata quest'idea? *

19. Nella tabella che segue sono riportate alcune delle possibili motivazioni legate alla decisione di partire dall'Italia. *

Indichi, per favore, quanto è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, mettendo una croce nel riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Ho sempre desiderato lasciare l'Italia una volta conclusi gli studi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mia famiglia di origine mi ha sempre incoraggiato(a) a cercare lavoro fuori dall'Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Italia non sono riuscito(a) a trovare un impiego che tenesse conto della mia qualifica professionale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ci sono altri componenti della mia famiglia di origine che sono emigrati prima di me e questo mi ha influenzato(a)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carenza di tecnologie avanzate o all'avanguardia nei laboratori italiani	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Scarse risorse economiche destinate alle attività di ricerca in Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meccanismi di corruzione (o nepotismo) troppo frequenti nel mondo accademico italiano	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scarsa meritocrazia delle università italiane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eccessiva incertezza lavorativa (precariato) in Italia e frustrazione	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mobilità internazionale è una componente fondamentale del processo di internazionalizzazione dell'apprendimento e per questo è importante fare esperienze fuori	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ci sono altre motivazioni che l'hanno indotta a partire dall'Italia?

20. Prima di trasferirsi in Portogallo viveva in Italia o in un altro paese? Se viveva in un altro paese, quale?

21. Quali motivi hanno influito sulla scelta del Portogallo, come paese di destinazione? *

Indichi, per favore, quanto è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, mettendo una croce nel riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Migliore qualità della vita in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Portogallo le possibilità di autonomia e soddisfazione nel mio lavoro sono maggiori	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Il mercato del lavoro portoghese riconosce maggiormente le mie qualifiche e competenze	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Il Portogallo mi attrae di più come paese del futuro	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prospettive di un più rapido sviluppo di carriera in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivi personali e familiari (es. ricongiungimento coniuge/compagno(a))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho vinto una borsa di dottorato, post-doc o altro in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho vinto una borsa di dottorato, post doc o altro in Portogallo, diversamente avrei scelto un altro paese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mia attività di ricerca è strettamente legata al Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ci sono altre motivazioni che l'hanno indotta a scegliere il Portogallo? Se sì, quali?

22. Aveva studiato il portoghese prima di partire dall'Italia o lo ha imparato sul posto? *

- ☐ Sì, avevo studiato portoghese prima della mia partenza
- ☐ No, l'ho imparato una volta arrivato(a) in Portogallo
- ☐ Non risponde
- ☐ Other:

23. Ha mai pensato di emigrare di una città del nord Europa (es. Londra)? Perché? *

Organizzazione della partenza

24. La tabella che segue fa riferimento al modo in cui ha organizzato la sua partenza per il Portogallo. *

Indichi, per favore, se è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, mettendo una croce nel riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	Sì	No
Ho organizzato la mia partenza raccogliendo informazioni da solo(a)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza da solo(a), senza alcuna informazione	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto della mia famiglia e amici in Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto della mia famiglia ed amici in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto dell'università/istituto di ricerca presso cui lavoro (o ho lavorato) una volta arrivato(a) in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di conoscenti in Portogallo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di organizzazioni ufficiali italiane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di organizzazioni ufficiali portoghesi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Con chi è partito(a)? *

- ☐ Solo(a)
- ☐ Con coniuge/compagno(a)
- ☐ Con amici
- ☐ Con altri familiari
- ☐ Altro

Inserimento, reti sociali, legami forti e deboli

26. Una volta arrivato(a) in Portogallo, qual è stato il suo percorso personale? *

- ☐ Vivo solo(a)
- ☐ Vivo con coniuge/compagno(a)
- ☐ Vivo con amici
- ☐ Vivo con altri familiari
- ☐ Altro

27. Ha rapporti con altri italiani che vivono a Lisbona? Con che frequenza vi incontrate? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai

28. Ha rapporti con organizzazioni italiane presenti a Lisbona? Se sì, con quali? *

29. Ha parenti che vivono in Italia? Con che frequenza vi sentite? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai
- ☐ Non ho parenti che vivono in Italia
- ☐ Non risponde

30. Ha amici che vivono in Italia? Con che frequenza vi sentite? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai
- ☐ Non ho amici che vivono in Italia
- ☐ Non risponde

31. Quali forme di comunicazione utilizza, normalmente, con le persone che vivono in Italia? *

- ☐ Telefono
- ☐ Skype
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Siti web e blog
- ☐ SMS
- ☐ Lettere
- ☐ Altro

Prospettive future

32. Come descriverebbe, in generale, la sua esperienza in Portogallo?

Molto soddisfacente	<input type="radio"/>
Soddisfacente	<input type="radio"/>
Abbastanza soddisfacente	<input type="radio"/>

- Insoddisfacente ☐
- Completamente insoddisfacente ☐

33. Pensa che in un prossimo futuro (nei prossimi 5 anni) si trasferirà nuovamente? *

Se la risposta è no, vada alla domanda 34, per favore.

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No
- ☐ Forse

Se sì, dove prevede di andare e per quali motivi?

34. Ha mai pensato di trasferirsi in Italia? Per quali motivi? *

MOLTE GRAZIE PER LA SUA GENTILE DISPONIBILITÀ!

Informazioni aggiuntive: qualora conoscesse altre persone interessate a compilare questo questionario, per cortesia, indichi qui il loro contatto e-mail.

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Appendix 2 – E-Survey London



Instituto de Geografia
e Ordenamento do Território
UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA



E-survey

Come prima cosa, desidero ringraziarla per avere deciso di dedicare del tempo a questo questionario.

L'obiettivo generale di questa ricerca è ottenere una visione d'insieme della mobilità di alcuni lavoratori italiani altamente qualificati (dottorandi, dottori di ricerca e docenti universitari), inscrivendo il fenomeno nel nuovo flusso di emigrazione dai paesi del sud d'Europa. Più nel dettaglio, si tratta di uno studio comparato sulla mobilità di ricercatori e docenti italiani a Lisbona e a Londra. Per questo motivo, il questionario verrà presentato ad alcuni dottorandi, dottori di ricerca e docenti che vivono a Lisbona (come esempio di mobilità sud-sud Europa) e ad altri che vivono a Londra (come esempio di mobilità sud-nord).

Tutte le informazioni contenute nelle sue risposte saranno trattate nel totale rispetto dell'anonimato e confidenzialità dei dati. I risultati dei dati raccolti saranno diffusi in forma aggregata e, pertanto, non verrà mai riportato il suo nome.

Può decidere di qualsiasi momento di ottenere la conferma, l'aggiornamento o la cancellazione (totale o parziale) dei dati inviati.

Nel caso avesse ulteriori domande, non esiti a contattarmi: fabiana.minneci@gmail.com

*** Required**

Indirizzo mail con il quale è stato(a) contattato(a) *

Questa informazione è richiesta al solo fine di evitare di ricontattare persone che hanno già risposto al questionario.

Informazioni generali

1. Sesso *

- ☐ Donna
☐ Uomo

2. Età *

3. Stato Civile *

- ☐ Libero
☐ Coniugato(a)
☐ Convivente/unione di fatto
☐ Separato(a)/divorziato(a)
☐ Vedovo(a)
☐ Non risponde

Se coniugato(a)/convivente/in una unione di fatto, dove è nato(a) il(la) suo(a) compagno(a)?

4. Luogo di nascita *

Regione

- ☐ Abruzzo
- ☐ Basilicata
- ☐ Calabria
- ☐ Campania
- ☐ Emilia - Romagna
- ☐ Friuli - Venezia Giulia
- ☐ Lazio
- ☐ Liguria
- ☐ Lombardia
- ☐ Marche
- ☐ Molise
- ☐ Piemonte
- ☐ Puglia
- ☐ Sardegna
- ☐ Sicilia
- ☐ Toscana
- ☐ Trentino - Alto Adige
- ☐ Umbria
- ☐ Valle d'Aosta
- ☐ Veneto
- ☐ Other:

5. Cittadinanza *

- ☐ Italiana
- ☐ Italiana e inglese
- ☐ Non risponde
- ☐ Other:

6. Da quanto tempo vive a Londra, all'incirca? *

- ☐ Meno di un anno
- ☐ Da 1 a 5 anni
- ☐ Da 5 a 8 anni
- ☐ Da circa 10 anni
- ☐ Da più di 10 anni

7. Si è iscritto(a) all'A.I.R.E (Anagrafe Italiani residenti all'estero)? *

- ☐ Sì

- ☐ No
- ☐ Non risponde

8. Ha figli? *

Se la risposta è no, vada alla domanda 9, per favore

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No
- ☐ Non risponde

Se ha figli, in che anno sono nati? Dove sono nati e in quale paese vivono attualmente?

9. Con quali lingue straniere è in grado di sostenere una conversazione? *

- ☐ Inglese
- ☐ Francese
- ☐ Tedesco
- ☐ Spagnolo
- ☐ Portoghese
- ☐ Other:

10. Quali lingue utilizza quotidianamente? *

- ☐ Italiano
- ☐ Inglese
- ☐ Francese
- ☐ Tedesco
- ☐ Spagnolo
- ☐ Portoghese
- ☐ Other:

11. Qual è la sua attuale occupazione professionale? *

- ☐ Studente di dottorato
- ☐ Post-doc/Ricercatore
- ☐ Docente universitario
- ☐ Other:

12. Dove lavora attualmente? *

Indichi, per favore, il nome dell'università/istituto di ricerca o altro e il paese in cui lavora attualmente.

13. Quale titolo di studio possiede? *

Indichi tutti i titoli di studio che possiede, per favore.

- ☐ Laurea triennale
- ☐ Laurea specialistica o magistrale
- ☐ Diploma di laurea (vecchio ordinamento)
- ☐ Dottorato di ricerca
- ☐ Diploma di specializzazione
- ☐ Master (I o II livello)
- ☐ Other:

Per ciascun titolo di studio posseduto indichi, per favore, l'anno in cui ha terminato il ciclo di studi, la facoltà cui era iscritto(a) e il paese in cui ha frequentato il corso. *

14. Durante l'università ha partecipato a qualche programma di mobilità internazionale (per es. progetto Erasmus, Leonardo)? *

Se la risposta è no, vada alla domanda 15, per favore

- ☐ Sì
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other:

Se sì, in che città?

Indichi, per favore, la città e il paese.

Quanto tempo ci è rimasto?

Cosa l'ha indotto a scegliere questa città?

15. Quanto è soddisfatto(a) della formazione ricevuta durante il suo percorso universitario? *

Selezioni il riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta, considerando una scala che va da 1 a 5, dove 1 rappresenta la completa insoddisfazione e 5 la completa soddisfazione.

1. Per niente
soddisfatto(a)

2. Poco

3. Abbastanza

4. Molto

5.
Completamente
soddisfatto(a)

	1. Per niente soddisfatto(a)	2. Poco	3. Abbastanza	4. Molto	5. Completamente soddisfatto(a)
Intensità	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Quanto è soddisfatto(a) del personale (docenti, ricercatori, personale tecnico-amministrativo) che ha incontrato all'interno dell'università? *

Selezioni il riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta, considerando una scala che va da 1 a 5, dove 1 rappresenta la completa insoddisfazione e 5 la completa soddisfazione.

	1. Per niente soddisfatto(a)	2. Poco	3. Abbastanza	4. Molto	5. Completamente soddisfatto(a)
Intensità	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Progetto migratorio / mobilità internazionale

17. Ricorda quando ha cominciato a pensare di volere partire dall'Italia? Come è nata quest'idea? *

18. Nella tabella che segue sono riportate alcune delle possibili motivazioni legate alla decisione di partire dall'Italia. *

Indichi, per favore, quanto è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, selezionando il riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Ho sempre desiderato lasciare l'Italia una volta conclusi gli studi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mia famiglia di origine mi ha sempre incoraggiato(a) a cercare lavoro fuori dall'Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Italia non sono riuscito(a) a trovare un impiego che tenesse conto della mia qualifica professionale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ci sono altri componenti della mia famiglia di origine che sono partiti prima di me e questo mi ha influenzato(a)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carenza di tecnologie avanzate o all'avanguardia nei laboratori italiani	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Scarse risorse economiche destinate alle attività di ricerca in Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meccanismi di corruzione (o nepotismo) troppo frequenti nel mondo accademico italiano	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scarsa meritocrazia delle università italiane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eccessiva incertezza lavorativa (precariato) in Italia e frustrazione	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mobilità internazionale è una componente fondamentale del processo di internazionalizzazione dell'apprendimento e per questo è importante per un ricercatore (o professore) fare esperienze fuori	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ci sono altre motivazioni che l'hanno indotta a partire dall'Italia?

19. Prima di trasferirsi a Londra, viveva in Italia o in un altro paese? Se viveva in un altro paese, quale? *

☐ Italia

☐ Other:

20. Quali motivi hanno influito sulla scelta del Regno Unito, come paese di destinazione? *

Indichi, per favore, quanto è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, selezionando il riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Migliore qualità della vita nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nel Regno Unito le possibilità di autonomia e soddisfazione nel mio lavoro sono maggiori	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Il mercato del lavoro inglese riconosce maggiormente le mie qualifiche e competenze	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	In completo disaccordo	In disaccordo	Incerto	Abbastanza d'accordo	Completamente d'accordo
Il Regno Unito mi attrae di più come paese del futuro	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prospettive di un più rapido sviluppo di carriera nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivi personali e familiari (es. ricongiungimento coniuge/compagno(a))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho vinto una borsa di dottorato, post-doc o altro nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho vinto una borsa di dottorato, post doc o altro nel Regno Unito, diversamente avrei scelto un altro paese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La mia attività di ricerca è strettamente legata al Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ci sono altre motivazioni che l'hanno indotta a scegliere Londra? Se sì, quali?

21. Aveva studiato altre lingue straniere oltre all'inglese, prima di partire dall'Italia? Se sì, quali? *

22. Ha mai pensato di spostarsi in una città del Sud Europa (es. Lisbona)? Perché? *

Organizzazione della partenza

23. La tabella che segue fa riferimento al modo in cui ha organizzato la sua partenza per il Regno Unito. *

Indichi, per favore, se è d'accordo o in disaccordo con ciascuna delle affermazioni che seguono, selezionando il riquadro che corrisponde alla sua scelta.

	Sì	No
Ho organizzato la mia partenza raccogliendo informazioni da solo(a)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Si	No
Ho organizzato la mia partenza da solo(a), senza alcuna informazione	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto della mia famiglia e amici in Italia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto della mia famiglia ed amici nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'aiuto dell'università/istituto di ricerca presso cui lavoro (o ho lavorato) una volta arrivato(a) nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di conoscenti nel Regno Unito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di organizzazioni ufficiali italiane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ho organizzato la mia partenza con l'appoggio di organizzazioni ufficiali inglesi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Con chi è partito(a)? *

- ☐ Solo(a)
- ☐ Con coniuge/compagno(a)
- ☐ Con amici
- ☐ Con altri familiari
- ☐ Altro

Inserimento, reti sociali, legami forti e deboli

25. Una volta arrivato(a) nel Regno Unito, qual è stato il suo percorso personale? *

- ☐ Vivo solo(a)
- ☐ Vivo con coniuge/compagno(a)
- ☐ Vivo con amici
- ☐ Vivo con altri familiari
- ☐ Altro

26. Ha rapporti con altri italiani che vivono a Londra? Con che frequenza vi incontrate? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai

27. Ha rapporti con organizzazioni italiane presenti a Londra? Se sì, con quali? *

28. Ha parenti che vivono in Italia? Con che frequenza vi sentite? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai
- ☐ Non ho parenti che vivono in Italia
- ☐ Non risponde

29. Ha amici che vivono in Italia? Con che frequenza vi sentite? *

- ☐ Tutti i giorni
- ☐ Più di una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Una volta alla settimana
- ☐ Più volte al mese
- ☐ Meno di una volta al mese
- ☐ Mai
- ☐ Non ho amici che vivono in Italia
- ☐ Non risponde

30. Quali forme di comunicazione utilizza, normalmente, con le persone che vivono in Italia? *

- ☐ Telefono
- ☐ Skype
- ☐ Instant messaging
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Siti web e blog
- ☐ SMS
- ☐ Lettere
- ☐ Altro

Prospettive future

31. Come descriverebbe, in generale, la sua esperienza fino ad ora a Londra? *

- ☐ Molto soddisfacente
- ☐ Satisfacente
- ☐ Abbastanza soddisfacente
- ☐ Insoddisfacente
- ☐ Completamente insoddisfacente

32. Qual è la sua opinione in merito all'esito del recente referendum sulla permanenza del Regno Unito nell'Unione Europea (Brexit)?

33. Ritieni che il voto a favore dell'uscita del Regno Unito dall'Unione Europea avrà un impatto sulla sua attività di ricerca (o attività professionale)? *

- ☐ Sì
☐ No
☐ Non lo so

Perché? *

34. Pensa che in un prossimo futuro (nei prossimi 5 anni) si trasferirà nuovamente? *

- ☐ Sì
☐ No
☐ Forse

Se sì, dove prevede di andare e per quali motivi?

35. Ha mai pensato di trasferirsi in Italia? Per quali motivi? *

MOLTE GRAZIE PER LA SUA GENTILE DISPONIBILITÀ!

Informazioni aggiuntive: qualora conoscesse altre persone interessate a compilare questo questionario, per cortesia, indichi qui il loro contatto e-mail.

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